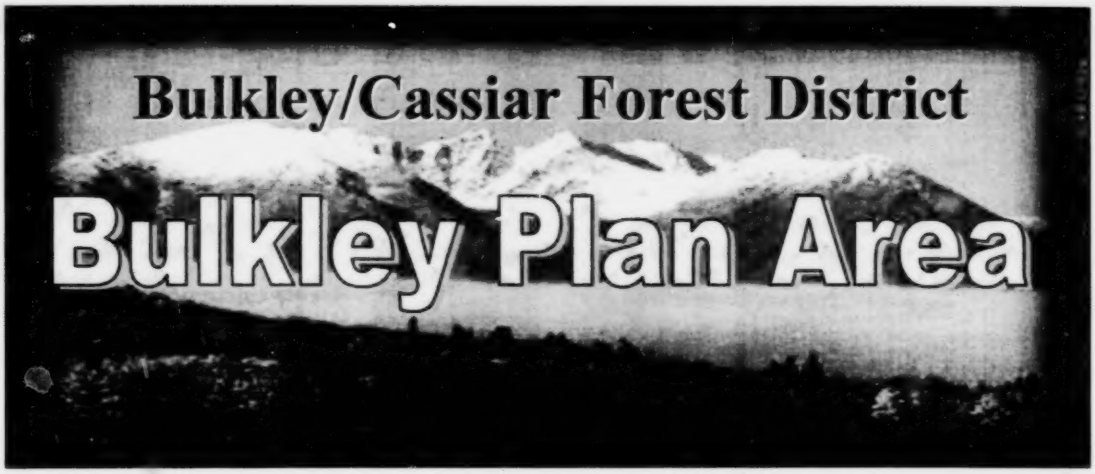

Bulkley/Cassiar Forest District

Bulkley Plan Area

Tourism Opportunity Study

Prepared for the:

MINISTRY OF SUSTAINABLE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Funding provided by:

MINISTRY OF SMALL BUSINESS, TOURISM AND CULTURE
NORTHERN DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
FOREST RENEWAL BC

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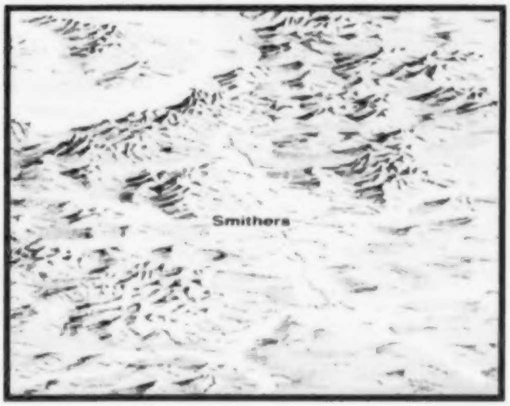
Executive Summary

Introduction



The tourism industry is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world economy. In BC, tourism is already the province's second largest industry – generating $9.2 billion in revenues with some 16,700 tourism-related businesses employing over 113,000 BC workers. British Columbia's tourism industry is expected to grow steadily over the next three years with the influence of the maturing baby boomer generation. With an increase in disposable income and leisure time, travel has become a priority for this segment of the population. There are also changes in the type of travel experiences being sought, with an increasing demand for specialty tours that cater to interests such as outdoor adventure, culture, education and wellness. Indeed, recent research would indicate that 'ecotourism' and 'adventure travel' is now the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry.

Many visitors to BC are already attracted to the province for its diverse natural beauty and outdoor recreational opportunities. Therefore, the province is perfectly poised to capitalize on the new opportunities for economic and employment growth possible from expansion in the ecotourism area. Rural BC communities, in particular, have a tremendous opportunity to expand and diversify their economic and employment base through land-based tourism development. Importantly, these opportunities for expansion in tourism are arriving at the same time that many rural BC communities are struggling with significant structural change in their traditional resource economies.

Recognizing both the challenges and opportunities presented by ecotourism expansion, the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism & Culture (MSBTC) developed a provincial Ecotourism Strategy as part of the provincial government's Green Economy Initiative.[1] Meredith & Associates of Smithers were commissioned by MSBTC to undertake this Tourism Opportunity Study to identify opportunities for sustainable community-based outdoor recreation and backcountry eco/adventure tourism development in the Bulkley/Cassiar Forest District – Bulkley Plan Area.

Study Purpose

As the provincial tourism industry grows, demand for the Super, Natural experiences that have become the signature tourism product for the province will continue to increase. This study aims to support integrated resource and community planning to promote regional economic, social and environmental sustainability. Through updating the existing tourism baseline information and examining the region's tourism development potential, this study attempts to assist with:

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[1] Note: Following the Provincial elections, the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism & Culture was eliminated. This former Ministry's major tourism functions have been transferred into two new Ministries, namely: the Ministry of Competition, Science & Enterprise and the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management.

diversifying the regional economy; maintaining access to recreational resources for local residents; and minimizing conflicts among resource users. To achieve these goals, the purpose of this project is to:

- Update and enhance existing Forest Recreation Resource Inventory (FRRI) and Tourism Resource Inventory (TRI) data;
- Conduct research and analysis to identify land and resource issues that have a bearing on tourism and recreation development;
- Based on the above, identify the best opportunities for ecotourism and adventure travel development and make recommendations for their support and development; and
- Prepare an Action Plan that communities and government agencies can undertake to develop tourism opportunities in the region.

In addition to identifying key opportunities for tourism development, this report identifies important issues and constraints, which may threaten potential tourism growth in the study area.

It should be noted that this analysis is neither meant to be exclusive nor exhaustive. Rather, a major study objective is to identify products featuring the best development capability based on a combination of natural resources, market potential and local suitability. The ultimate value of this project is in identifying key opportunities and actions required to assist in the priority-setting of key players in tourism planning, and in providing further direction to communities, business people and organizations involved in tourism development in the region.

Study Objectives

The primary focus of this study's analysis is based on commercial outdoor recreation in the Bulkley Plan Area and surrounding lands of interest to the Wet'suwet'en First Nations. Four major objectives involved in developing this TOS include:

1. Preparing an inventory of tourism operators, facilities, features, areas of use and infrastructure. Strategies involved to conduct this include: building on existing Forest Recreation and Tourism Resource Inventory (TRI) data; using existing data, previous studies, and first hand interviews and surveys of area tourism operators; identifying land and resource issues with a bearing on tourism development; and providing summary statistics on existing tourism activities.

2. Creating maps outlining the potential of the natural resource base to support defined tourism activities. Strategies involved to conduct this include: identifying up to 10 products/activities with high development suitability; reviewing the 1996 Northwest TRI product capability modelling; preparing an initial set of maps by adjusting the baseline using a feature-based methodology; modifying product maps with input from industry and local community experts; and incorporating constraints where applicable and available.

3. Undertaking an economics-based analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). Strategies involved to conduct this include: using latest market research and information gathered through surveys and interviews; incorporating results of inventory compilation; and describing tourism opportunities in 10 tourism product areas.

4. Preparing a local ecotourism development Action Plan. Strategies involved to conduct this include: consulting with local stakeholders (elected officials, planning agencies, community groups, First Nations, tourism operators and recreational organizations); incorporating local concerns, constraints and issues about tourism planning; and preparing action plans which communities could follow in developing their tourism economies.

Study Methodology

To successfully conduct this TOS, a number of work steps were involved. This included:

- Establishing a Local Advisory Committee (LAC) to guide the study and provide an opportunity for community involvement in the TOS.
- Reviewing previous studies to summarize of tourism opportunities.
- Surveying tourism operators, recreation groups, and agencies to identify information on existing operations and tourism opportunities.[2]
- Compiling data through collecting, updating, refining and organizing information from government agencies and tourism operators.
- Conducting a preliminary product and community analysis report to identify key tourism opportunities.
- Establishing a status report and maps summarizing the process and its preliminary results.
- Conducting a tourism analysis to identify opportunities and related information in more detail, with specific implementation recommendations submitted as Draft Report.
- Finalizing the report and data to incorporate all reports, analysis, and map folios. Digital mapping adhered to provincial standards.

Based on the above initiatives, the following steps review the key components of Bulkley/Cassiar Forest District TOS. These include an overview of: BC's tourism industry and the Bulkley/Cassiar study area; land use planning and resource management in the study area; tourism resources of the Bulkley Valley; the tourism opportunity analysis and tourism action plans.

BC's Tourism Industry

BC's tourism industry is a vital and vibrant component of the provincial economy. In 1999, provincial tourism revenue totalled $9.2 billion, a 4.9% increase over 1998. This involved hosting approximately 22.3 million overnight visitors and employing an estimated 110,780 people, or 7.6% of the provincial labour force. Over a ten-year period, tourism employment rose 12.1% between 1990 to 1999 and contributed $2.3 billion in 1999 alone in wages and salaries.

Other impressive tourism industry statistics include the establishment of 17,075 tourism-related business operations in BC in 1999: a 2.2% increase from 1998, accounting for approximately 1 in 9 provincial business start-ups. Tourism industry growth figures within the provincial GDP include 0.7% in 1998, totalling $4.3 billion and accounting for 4.8% of the total provincial GDP. Furthermore, where traditional export industries ship commodities to markets in other countries, in tourism the consumers (markets) travel to the product. In 1999, $4.0 billion of BC's tourism revenue was earned in foreign exchange representing an increase of 8.2% over 1998 and a 35.5% increase since 1995.

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[2] A total of 93 tourism contacts were identified as based in or operating in the study area. The response rate through survey and telephone interviews was 27%.

For rural BC, the tourism industry's ability to create new and relatively stable long-term jobs for local residents is positive at a time when primary resource industries are experiencing economic downturns. The tourism sector also assists in promoting economic diversification in rural communities. In fact, because the majority of money spent generation is imported from other geographic regions; research suggests that tourism expenditures can multiply by five to seven times in local communities. Tourism in rural areas also acts as a 'recruiting' and revitalizing device to attract new residents and businesses to an area. Finally, the tourism industry facilitates exceptional lifestyle and entrepreneurial opportunities.

Ecotourism focuses on experiencing natural or indigenous culture in a way that minimizes impacts. Appealing to a global market, BC's high quality and diverse natural scenery offers competitive conditions for the province's expanding eco-adventure tourism sector. On a provincial scale, the value of ecotourism is estimated to be $350 million annually - the fastest growing segment of the BC tourism sector. With strong North American interests in ecotourism products, opportunities for expansion of BC's ecotourism sector is substantial .

In addition to an expanding outdoor adventure/ecotourism market, this niche market is also changing. This involves factors regarding access and opportunities to enjoy these products and technological change in the products offered. Access to a secure land base is crucial to ensure the continued ability to offer quality adventure tourism and ecotourism products. Technological innovations affect the adventure recreation experience in its ability to improve access/transportation, comfort, safety, communications and information. Lesser skilled participants are now more able to partake in activities at the more extreme end of the spectrum. The significance of increasingly sophisticated technology is its ability to continue to stimulate participation and open up new opportunities for business and market development.

Given that future tourism growth in Canada and BC will be driven by interest in outdoor experiences, particularly those in the soft adventure market and ecotourism, a number of implications for tourism development in the study area arise. The Bulkley region has many of the attributes needed to appeal to these markets, however, development will depend on key responses. Operators must understand the risk-reward relationship and provide the features and amenities that have the strongest appeal for local travel markets. These tend to be in the soft adventure category. They must incorporate technology and innovation so as to broaden market appeal for activities in demand, and improve their own competitiveness. They must seek greater co-operation with land managers and communities to ensure the Crown land base recognizes the demands and needs of tourism as a legitimate resource user. Communities must play a more prominent role by furnishing infrastructure and support services that underpin the industry and the employment and regional income benefits it can bring to local residents.

Bulkley TOS Plan Area

Included within the Bulkley Timber Supply Area (TSA), the study area covers 762,000 hectares and is located in the eastern side of the Skeena watershed. Bounded by the Telkwa River watershed in the south and the headwaters of the Nilkitkwa River in the north, the Bulkley Valley contains the major population concentration, including the communities of Smithers (est. 1998 pop. 6,073), Telkwa (est. 1995 pop. 1,199) and Moricetown (est. 1991 pop. 650).

Forestry, mining, tourism, agriculture and the public sector form the economic base in the area. Forestry is the most dominant industry, accounting for about 23 per cent of the basic sector income in the Bulkley Plan Area. Historically, the tourism industry in the Smithers/Telkwa area has consisted of accommodation and food facilities, which catered to highway travellers. In recent years, there has been an expansion of businesses catering to outdoor/adventure tourists.

First Nations in the Bulkley Plan Area

The Bulkley TSA is part of the traditional territories of the Gitxsan, Wet'suwet'en, Nat'oot'en and Tsimshian peoples. Only the Wet'suwet'en and Nat'oot'en have permanent communities in the Bulkley TSA. Wet'suwet'en territory spans 22,000 sq. kms. and includes the communities of: Moricetown, Nee-Tahi-Buhn, Skin-Tyee, Hagwilget and Wet'suwet'en. The Nee-Tahi-Buhn, Skin-Tyee and Hagwilget bands are located in Burns Lake and New Hazelton, respectively.

The community of Moricetown, comprised of several small reserves, is situated along the Bulkley River northwest of Smithers. The total population of the Wet'suwet'en is estimated at 2,086 and 1,357 for Moricetown respectively. The Nat'oot'en people of Fort Babine are part of the Lake Babine Band whose main office is in Burns Lake. The community of Fort Babine is situated at the north end of Babine Lake and has a population of around 135 individuals. The Lake Babine Band has approximately 1,357 members (1991), many of whom reside outside the TSA, in Burns Lake and elsewhere.

Unemployment among aboriginal peoples in the Bulkley TSA is significantly higher than it is in other segments of the population, and both the Moricetown Band and the Lake Babine Band are interested in developing employment opportunities in the area. Options examined include commercial fisheries, forestry, and tourism. The Fort Babine people have worked out an agreement with SCI Smithers to harvest a portion of the company's Forest License apportionment in the Babine Lake area.

A number of community values and concerns exist among these First Nations communities. Ultimately, fair and meaningful involvement in the governing and management of land resources in each Nation's territory is desired. This involves a strong interest in developing employment opportunities that utilize the TSA's resources in a sustainable manner – including tourism.

Land Use Planning & Resource Management in the Study Area

Tourism development in BC is expanding at rates well beyond overall economic growth rates. An increasing part of the industry is oriented to outdoor recreation products that rely in large part on access to the Crown land and resource base. The importance of Crown land to tourism industry development is seen in literature produced by the Council of Tourism Associations of British Columbia (COTA). At the annual BC Tourism Industry Conference, the industry ranked land use and marketing as the two top issues of concern for tourism in the province. Land use planning that values tourism interests, involvement of tourism interests in land use decisions, the availability of Crown land for purchase and tenure and relations between tourism and the forest industry were key issues.

Some progress has been made in recent years to improve tourism representation in the land use decision-making process. The Land and Resource Management Planning (LRMP) process has at least created a forum for discussing multiple use and sustainability concepts and tourism's possible role. The Tourism Opportunity Strategy (TOS) is a further step to sound land use because they profile the current status of local tourism development, provide detailed information required for sub-regional or community level planning, and can be used to identify, develop and promote appropriate, sustainable tourism development opportunities.

A number of Provincial agencies play a role managing tourism values and activities. This includes the following: Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management (MSRM), British Columbia Assets and Land Corporation (BCAL); Ministry of Water, Land & Air Protection (MWLAP – formerly MELP -- includes BC Parks), Ministry of Forests (MoF). Other relevant Crown corporations and agencies either directly or indirectly involved in tourism include: BC Fisheries, Tourism BC and the BC Environmental Assessment Office.

In March 1998, the Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) was approved. This higher level plan concedes that tourism and outdoor recreation is a growing industry in the Bulkley Plan area: "*It is thus very important to manage this resource to maintain or enhance opportunities for a diverse range of recreational values and uses across the biophysical settings of the area.*" General Management Direction for visual quality, outdoor recreation and tourism are included in the plan along with some specific directives associated with the plan area's twelve resource management zones. Since the LRMP, a number of recreation and tourism planning strategies have occurred including visual landscape inventories, a Recreation Access Management Plan (RAMP), a Caribou Recovery Plan, a Strategic Recreation Plan and a Management Direction Statement for Babine River Corridor Park.

Tourism Profile of the Bulkley Plan Area

The Bulkley TOS Plan Area is in a prime area of BC for tourism development. Featuring magnificent scenic resources with abundant natural and pristine wilderness areas, the region has diverse opportunities for mountain and river recreation, camping, wildlife viewing, and a range of other tourism and recreation activities. A range of attractions, parks, and facilities, cater to tourism and recreational needs, supports these resources. [Currently however, outdoor / adventure / cultural / heritage tourism products do not meet market demands. The opportunity to better capture this market through product development, enhanced tourism services and marketing is strong.]

The tourism industry in the Bulkley Plan Area, particularly outdoor/adventure tourism, has become a significant and growing component of the local economy. Although tourism ranks below forestry in terms of employment and employment income, it represents one possible opportunity for economic development in the area. Smithers – located halfway between Prince George and Prince Rupert – is an overnight or refreshment stop for highway travelers. Traffic volumes continue to grow due to highway improvements and the growing number of ferry passengers embarking or disembarking at Prince Rupert. Furthermore, Smithers benefits from being located along one of two highway routes to Alaska and has direct air access to major urban centres. Recently, the tourism industry in the Smithers and Telkwa area has expanded into the outdoor/adventure market. The area is well endowed with scenic attractions and abundant wildlife populations, making it extremely well suited to both winter and summer outdoor/adventure tourism activities.

Exceptional natural attributes that make the study area attractive to both resident and non-resident travellers include the following:

- High quality recreational fishing opportunities including a Class 1 (Babine) river and six Class 2 Rivers.
- Abundant and diverse wildlife, including grizzly bear, caribou and goat populations which provide excellent opportunities for wildlife viewing and hunting;
- Numerous mountain ranges and valleys offering a variety of opportunities for a broad range of outdoor activities, including rock climbing, ice climbing, hiking, trail riding, cross-country skiing and downhill skiing; and,
- Numerous lakes and rivers offering a variety of opportunities for water-based recreation including kayaking, canoeing, rafting and fishing.

In the Bulkley Plan Area, the feature and landscape accessibility and geographical relationships provides a guide for division into resource areas or units. Three units were identified: the ***Western*** Unit, the ***Bulkley and Adjoining Ranges*** Unit and the ***Northeast*** Unit. Characterized by dramatic ranges with extensive alpine, sub-alpine and ice fields, lakes and creeks, the Western Unit provides mid- to backcountry recreation opportunities. The Bulkley Valley and Adjoining Ranges Unit provides front- to mid-country recreation opportunities. This area features rural communities, rolling ridges with extensive alpine and small glaciers as well as small lakes and rivers. The Northeast Unit provides front to backcountry recreation opportunities and is characterized by rural communities, rounded ridges with jagged peaks and sub-alpine and alpine features. Specific focus areas within each of these Units are:

UNIT	FOCUS
Western	Ashman Range, Mt. Sir Robert Range, Caribou/Sinclair Range, Howsons Range, South Telkwa Range, Zymoetz R./Mulwain Red
Bulkley Valley and Adjoining Ranges	Bulkley Valley, Rocher Deboule Range, North Telkwa Range, Sandstone/Louise, Blunt Seaton Range, Babine Range and Dome Mtn., Harold Price/Blunt Basin, McQuarry Lakes, Hudson Bay Ranges, Microwave Plateau.

Northeast	Netazul Range, Thoen French Range, Babine Lake/River, Nilkitwa River, Sicintine Range, Bait Ranges.

The Bulkley's natural attributes indicate potential to expand the tourism industry, but other areas in BC have similar attributes and compete for market share. Southern regions have the advantage of being easily accessible from the province's large population centres. However, the Bulkley area offers wilderness opportunities, which are diminishing as resources are developed in the more accessible regions of the province. If wilderness opportunities in the Bulkley area are maintained the region's appeal to visitors may increase.

Historically, tourism operators in the Smithers/Telkwa area consisted of accommodation and food facilities catering to highway travellers. Being situated on the Yellowhead Highway, car-based touring traffic to Alaska or the Inside Passage is common in the summer months. In recent years, an expansion of businesses catering to outdoor/adventure tourists has occurred. Now, approximately 40% of the area's tourist-dependent businesses rely on natural resources in the immediate area as well as of areas as far away as the Spatsizi Wilderness Area. The composition of these products includes 12 fishing lodges, 5 guide-outfitter territories, a downhill ski area and a number of outdoor guide services and facilities.

The interest in adventure tourism has stimulated growth in the number of businesses offering unique adventure tourism products. Some guide-outfitters and fishing lodge operators are becoming involved in adventure tourism as well. Adventure tourism products, which are viable in the Bulkley TOS Plan Area, include: ice climbing, ski mountaineering and rock climbing courses/packages; day trip or week long dog sled excursions; rafting and canoeing trips; guided snowmobile tours; guided trail rides; guided day hikes and backpacking tours; outdoor education programs; and guided back-country skiing.

These operations rely on a relatively unspoiled natural resource base. To date, the scenic, wildlife and wilderness attributes of the area have made it a viable contender in the outdoor/adventure tourism market. However, increased access and resource development may reduce the potential for this component of the tourism industry to provide stable jobs and income in the long-term.

Based on a workshop held with tourism stakeholders in Smithers, a number of opportunities and concerns were voiced regarding existing and potential tourism operations in the plan area. Opportunities included: outdoor education, a number of nature-based and adventure tourism products, development of a large lodge facility and targeting specific markets such as foreign students/schools. Concerns included: costly, inefficient transportation to the area, the lack of a large-scale destination market attraction, too much red-tape to develop a business, the lack of land use certainty to provide a quality backcountry product, market fragmentation and the lacking emphasis on cultural and heritage tourism products.

Visitor Trends

Access to up-to-date and pertinent visitor research is fundamental to the successful design, development and operation of a tourism service or product. Over the past number of years, provincial visitor survey initiatives have less than effectively surveyed visitors to this area of the province. The main item of concern is the lack of visitor survey / contact points addressing the Highway #37 "North To Alaska" highway corridor. Survey contact points have been facilitated along the Highway #16 corridor (usually Prince George & Prince Rupert) but visitors entering or exiting the region via the Highway #37 corridor are mostly missed during these provincial visitor surveys. In recognition that a vast number of visitors to the study area utilize this corridor, regional data summations are weak in this respect. Data from the 1995/96 Provincial Visitor Study is used in this study to review visitor information for North West BC (NWBC).

With respect to visitor volume and value, an estimated 2.2 million visitors travelled to NWBC for a day or overnight trip, 73% of who are residents of BC. The total NWBC share of provincial visitation is about 7%. Visitors to NWBC spend about $425 million per season with non-residents accounting for 33% of this spending and residents accounting for 67% of regional revenues. An average of $54 is spent per day during their stay with non-residents spending about $234 per stay compared to residents spending about $178 per stay. The total NWBC share of provincial tourism revenues is about 5%. Length of stay per visit in the area averages at 4.4 days for non-residents and 3.4 days for resident visitors.

The greatest number of visitors to the area originates from other parts of northern BC (55%). This is followed by other Canadians (38%), close-in and long-haul US visitors (23% and 17% respectively). Overseas visitors account for about 13% of the area's visitors. The trip main for tourists was for leisure purposes (81% non-residents and 86% residents). Other Canadians and US visitors were the most likely markets (21%) to have traveled for business purposes. Non-residents averaged 44 years of age and Long Haul/Overseas markets tended to be older with 38% aged 55 years and older. Summer season is by far the busiest tourism season in NWBC, however, high potential to expand winter-based tourism opportunities exists.

While in Northwestern BC, non-resident visitors showed substantial interest in a number of activities including visiting art galleries/museums/exhibits (25%), city/town sightseeing (16%) and freshwater fishing (15%). Virtually all resident visitors (93%) spent time visiting with friends and relatives during their visit to NWBC compared to only 8% of non-resident visitors.

During their trip to BC, non-resident visitors enjoyed a number of outdoor activities including wildlife viewing/bird watching (50%), visiting National or Provincial parks (43%), freshwater or saltwater fishing (16%). In addition, many non-resident tourists visited attractions such as historic sites (43%), art galleries/museums (28%) as well as First Nations cultural sites (26%). BC residents travelling in BC also partook in outdoor activities including sightseeing (41%) and wildlife viewing/bird watching (33%), hiking/backpacking (24%), and visiting attractions such as historic sites (31%).

Visitor spending by non-resident visitors included package tours purchased in BC (28%). Food, beverages and accommodation represent approximately one-half of the total tourism monies spent in BC (46%) by regional visitors, close-in 'other' Canadians and US visitors. A substantial proportion of expenditures also went towards transportation (18%) and package tours purchased in BC (16%) from the two latter groups. Regional visitors spent an additional 15% on accommodations while travelling in the region.

Tourism Product Selection

Over 50 potential tourism activities identified by MSBTC were evaluated by the consulting team to determine those with the greatest potential for outdoor recreation-based tourism development in the plan area. A short-list was generated and presented to the LAC team. Based on this, chosen tourism products were grouped or singled out and include:

- Mountain Biking
- Mountaineering
- Summer Trail Products
- Nature Observation/Heritage Interpretation
- Nordic Skiing/Ski Touring
- Fresh Water Activity: Non-motorized and Motorized
- Air Tour and Access
- Snowmobiling
- Destination Lodge / Hut system

These products can be regarded as the best short-term options for outdoor recreation-based tourism development. However none exist in isolation, and opportunities to build on clusters of tourism products or where products could be linked are extremely important and are described in this report. Criteria used to assess these products include: product line and delivery, complementary product lines, product enhancement, development considerations and other comments. A suitability analysis for each of these potential products was conducted and mapped.

A community and tourism product matching analysis conducted for Fort Babine and the Smithers/Moricetown/Telkwa areas determined the following possible development opportunities for these communities.

Fort Babine	Ski touring, summer trail, nature observation/cultural heritage, whitewater kayaking and rafting, flatwater boating, destination lodge, hut systems.
Smithers Moricetown Telkwa	Ski touring, summer trail, nature observation/cultural heritage, whitewater kayaking and rafting, flatwater boating, destination lodge, hut systems, air, road touring.

First Nations Tourism Initiatives

After substantial consultation with Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs and clan members, three (3) significant opportunities were defined to implement a 'tourism strategy'. These projects have been engineered to capture the essence of all Wet'suwet'en interests, and to capitalize on all eight sectors of tourism. Three selected projects were selected to ensure that tourism development utilizes all Wet'suwet'en resources and will act as models for further tourism development. These include: Wet'suwet'en Tourism Services, Trails and Morice River Rafting.

In terms of tourism, the Fort Babine Band recognizes that the wilderness-like quality of the area in which they live has potential for supporting a fishing and hunting lodge. Fort Babine Enterprises Society has constructed a lodge and eight log cabins on Babine Lake. Four more cabins and serviced RV sites will be built in the future. The company is also interested in developing a "photo hunting" business to complement the lodge and cabin facilities. Band members have indicated a wide range of interests including use of historic trails, cabins along Babine & Nilkitkwa Lakes, skiing on French

Peak, riverboat tours and purchase of a Smithers hotel to serve as a base for their tourism operations.

Tourism Opportunity Analysis

Air Tour and Access

The Air Tour and Access Product is associated with scenic touring as well as providing access to and opportunities for mountain biking, paragliding, hiking, skiing and fishing. It utilizes the diversity of helicopters and the affordability of fixed wing aircraft. It compliments many tourism activity products. It has two components:

- An air tour allows tourists an opportunity to view surrounding landscapes while experiencing flying. Tours are best limited to an hour. Dramatic landscapes or diverse features are essential.
- The air access tour contains an air tour component but it is primarily to get recreationists to where they want to be. Turn around time from the base to the delivery area should be done within the shortest time possible and is most suited for the helicopter.

The potential for flight-related outdoor activities in the Bulkley is favourable because almost the entire region is accessible within reasonable flying time of the Smithers airport. A multitude of activity options are within reach of a 10 to 15 minute ride. However, the overall low tourism volumes will ultimately limit the potential. Areas such as Vancouver and Whistler can offer flightseeing and heli services because there is a critical mass of visitor volumes. Despite the excellent resource attributes, Smithers cannot rely upon a deep pool of visitors.

Destination Lodge/Hut System

There are many opportunities for themed development in the Bulkley. Alpine, river, First Nations and agri-tourism could all be exploited. The multi-activity lodge could be very successful in Smithers, Telkwa or Moricetown because of the proximity to so much quality outdoor activities. This would necessitate establishing linkages with existing tourism operators who have commercial recreation tenure for complementary activities (e.g. wildlife viewing, hiking, and kayaking). By being multi-activity and multi-season, lodges should be in a better position to manage their cash flow and staff.

Opportunity for a First Nations lodge for cultural interpretation and exposition are very positive. The Office of the Wet'suwet'en has prepared preliminary plans for a facility at Moricetown Canyon. With good highway access and close proximity to important natural and cultural attributes this facility could create a critical mass of tourism activity in the area. It could be linked to hiking, biking, trail riding, agri-tourism, cultural interpretation and wildlife viewing (salmon). Training programs could easily be established to take advantage of the labour pool in Moricetown.

Fresh Water Activity - Motorized & Non-Motorized

The water activity product includes an array of recreation activities, including whitewater kayaking (adventure product), rafting, canoeing (non-motorized water product) and jet boating (motorized water product). Complementary features such as sport fish, waterfalls, rapids, pools, ledges, standing waves and other water features allow for more diverse product development.

The best potential is in the soft adventure/participant category for domestic, short-haul and German markets. All of these markets are seeking a broader outdoor adventure experience and will decide to participate in recreational paddling once in the region. The Bulkley can offer a range of close-in/remote adventures. Nature observation, wildlife viewing and fishing are also attractants for these markets. The German market, especially, is interested in wildlife viewing. Multi-activity packaging and interpretation is essential.

The major constraining factor is a lack of grade 3+ water that would attract enthusiasts and adventure seekers. Also the area does not boast a lakes series with connecting waterways (rivers, streams) and portages that are usually preferred over single, isolated large lakes. Lakes connected in such a manner may provide opportunities for multi-day wilderness paddling trips. This should focus attention more on the casual participant interested in the softer, short duration adventures. Kayaking, rafting and fishing will be of more interest to the existing regional and short-haul travellers (western US and Canada) to the region, more so than canoeing.

The ability to package sport fishing, nature observation, historical interpretation with boating activities can help operators diversify, but avoidance of high use locations will be necessary to minimize conflicts with other users.

Mountain Biking

The potential is average for this product in the Bulkley, with the best opportunities close in to Smithers and Telkwa. Mountain biking and tour operators will need to collaborate with the local accommodation industry and other tourism providers to support their product. Packaging with other guided activities will extend the reach to soft adventurers. Developing commercial ventures in the study area will be a real challenge because it is often convenient to engage in unguided activities. The key will be providing convenient support services (shuttling, rentals, repair, accommodation, meals, interpretation) to convert these participants to buyers of a value-added product. Some of these services are available now from the McBride Shop in Smithers.

Mountaineering

The significant increase in the popularity of indoor climbing will result in increasing popularity of sport climbing and bouldering. Consequently, potential to expand the rock climbing product in the Bulkley plan area exists. Providing more teaching and instruction is one of the best ways to create more appeal for this product locally among participants and enthusiasts. A sub-market of this may include corporate climbing which cateris to large corporations, which use climbing for team building and experiential learning.

Mountaineers value unspoiled, unpolluted and uncrowded mountain wilderness, which explains the concentration of activity in protected areas. While the Bulkley can offer a wilderness experience it lacks a hut system to facilitate mountaineering activities. The hut product is closely associated with the development of multi-day products and are a main alternative to camping. The majority of the hut system in the Rockies is run by the Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) or by BC Parks. One major advantage of a hut system is that it would increase the appeal of this product to participants in the soft adventure market.

Mountaineering has been made more accessible through the use of helicopters, snowmobiles and glacier ski planes. Operators can appeal to the softer adventure market by using motorized transportation and superior accommodation facilities to offset trip durations and safety concerns. This is what heli-ski operators have done to create summer capacity for their facilities. In catering to the soft adventure participant and emphasizing the comforts of lodges and gourmet meals, clients are given the opportunity to "experience" the mountains and the thrill of summating, without having to learn the hard, technical skills of mountaineering and climbing.

Nature Observation /Heritage Interpretation

The viewing of heritage, culture, wildlife and nature in general are principal components of ecotourism (low impact, non-consumptive tourism). As growth of the ecotourism industry continues, the region can benefit through increased marketing of their significant assets and developing further infrastructure that meets the demand for a range of products, from rustic to full-service. The overall potential for the development of this product in the Bulkley is very good, primarily in the areas of First Nations interpretation.

Higher levels of interpretation and alternate programming will have to be undertaken to expand the appeal to already busy touring travellers. Survey data indicates that educational trips are a growing attractant for this group of travellers.

The future demand for all aspects of this product will continue to grow and evolve as increased infrastructure, interpretation and operator expertise bring new and interesting sub-products to market. Demographic trends, including increasing education levels among travellers and the demand for more learning and participatory experiences, will favour communities that have made the investment in facility and product development.

The further visitors travel to their final destination, the more likely they are to purchase guided interpretive products, and the more likely they are to have an interest in First Nations culture. With high levels of visitation from long-haul markets, the region has the opportunity to deliver more interpretation to existing travel markets. First Nations participation in the development of such products is essential, but steps will have to be taken to encourage more joint ventures and business partnerships.

Heritage interpretation and development has many implications for First Nations communities in Fort Babine and Moricetown. However, a clearly articulated and applied heritage resource policy may have to be brought forward by local bands to develop this product appropriately.

Nordic Skiing/Ski Touring

There are three general types of nordic skiing: cross-country skiing (undertaken on groomed trails), light-touring (usually involves front to mid-country excursions), and backcountry ski touring (involves single or multi-day trips/excursions). In terms of potential, some exists for immediate modest growth in the local, regional and international adventure recreation markets, principally among winter backcountry users. Focused promotional efforts will be required to increase exposure, and in this sense, not having any national parks in the region is a disadvantage.

In spite of the favourable market trends, the ski touring product will be difficult to expand in the study area. The best commercial potential will be for ski touring packaged around lodge and resort development. In addition, the close proximity of several outdoor winter activities to Smithers/Telkwa may hold out some opportunity for multi-activity packages involving activities such as downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, ice climbing and ski touring.

The potential for cross-country skiing is also favourable. By taking advantage of existing groomed trails and infrastructures development can be facilitated. While natural features such as varied terrain are important, the built environment is critical. There are already facilities in the communities, which could be expanded and enhanced. In Smithers, there is very good potential exists to market nordic skiing to downhill skiers travelling to Hudson's Bay Mountain. Visitation statistics from Whistler indicate that participation in cross-country skiing is growing at rates comparable to downhill skiing. It is believed that many downhill skiers are responsible for this expansion.

Summer Trail Products

Trail products include hiking (generally frontcountry, mid-country or from a lodge), backpacking (midcountry/backcountry), animal assisted, such as llama or horse packing (primarily backcountry) or horseback riding (front country to backcountry). The activities take place on trails or off trail, terrain permitting. Trail riding and hiking have some good potential in the region because of high quality resources, some good trail systems and visitor markets that place high value on hiking activity. Among visitors to the area, hiking/backpacking is rated the third most important outdoor activity among non-residents. The potential for commercial hiking tours spans a full range of options from multi-day trekking tours to short interpreted tours of the frontcountry.

Demand will continue to increase for hiking both as a primary activity and as a secondary activity in conjunction with other products. Because of its accessibility, low skill requirements, relative safety and instant appeal, growth rates among North American and European hiking markets are expected to continue to climb even as the overall population ages.

Trail riding is not expected to grow as strongly as hiking but nevertheless maintains an interest level that has yet to be exploited in the region. This may involve linking riding with the ranching/farming sector in the Bulkley Valley. The development of a multi-use trail network, particularly in the Smithers/Telkwa area could involve the shared use of working animals to defray the costs of operation.

Building a better summer trail product in the Bulkley region will require effective marketing and promotion to attract Highway 16 travellers. The production and distribution of self-guiding aides, including trail books, books, maps and web sites could increase participation levels. Commercial operators must provide additional value to gain customers, either through a quality experience (e.g. interpretation, meals, lodging) and/or adding other desired activities, which the customers cannot do on their own. Diversifying products offered assists in increasing return visitation and hut development in remote locales could facilitate multi-day tours. This product would appeal to the hiking enthusiast market. There is a growing market, especially in the US, for wilderness camping.

Snowmobiling

The large snowfall, the allure of high alpine "powder" snowmobiling areas and the remote and spectacular scenery are all significant advantages for the Bulkley district. The fact that Smithers and Telkwa are so close to major snowmobile areas is a bonus. However, overall potential is limited because of distance to markets. Local development will not simply be a matter of trying to attract more sledders. Existing participants have to be convinced to purchase either guiding services or lease equipment and gear. Operators and the hospitality sector will have to add value and service to the snowmobiling experience. There is a need to improve infrastructure and hospitality services to encourage longer and more frequent trips. For commercial development, access to high quality alpine destinations is very important – access that is restricted or too distant will deter investment.

Tourism Action Plans

Tourism Action Plans focus on broader tourism and community development issues that have implications for product development. The focus here is on correcting weaknesses and gaps that may impede development. Without the basic building blocks of economic development, communities will find it difficult to attract and grow the investment, entrepreneurship, labour and infrastructure needed to create high value tourism.

Key development challenges include the following: developing local commitment, preparing highly suitable tourism products for the market, developing quality and competitive tourism products, and attracting the required financing and investment capital for tourism development. Through extensive community consultation, two main community challenges also arise. These include developing appropriate and inclusive adventure products and expanding the economic benefits derived from tourism development locally.

Based on these challenges, a number of regional and community recommendations have been developed. This report summary concludes with the following recommendations:

- **Cooperating on implementation:** distribute the TOS and other information/education material to increase knowledge and interest in implementation; consider a regional coordination approach to implement strategic tasks; establish a one-year action plan to identify and conduct high priority tasks; encourage the development of a Bulkley Valley Tourism Organization; work with senior government agencies to implement tourism development.

- **Community support and cooperation**: communication with local politicians to convey fiscal significance of tourism; compare/share tourism strategies between communities; prepare annual tourism development progress report card; consider developing stay-at-home tourism products; identify opportunities for corporate collaboration on tourism products.

- **First Nations tourism development**: encourage linkages between aboriginal tourism organizations; investigate existing programs/funding sources for potential development guidance; encourage the implementation of a visitor services program to raise cultural awareness and mitigate potential problems.

- **Networking**: prepare a regional tourism database; investigate a visitor pass/coupon book concept; establish a local best practices guide for local operations; investigate "product club" idea, which uses a collaborative approach to tourism development, research and planning.

- **Land and Resource Management**: encourage active support of land use plans to ensure active management of tourism values and resources; work with First Nations to develop cultural code of ethics for tourism development initiatives; work with municipal governments to identify potential development/conversion sites; distribute a tourism investor's handbook to assist in the regulatory process; coordinate infrastructure investments around sustainability objectives.

- **Tourism Business Development**: investigate the feasibility of local operator accreditation; create tourism opportunity lists using this report as a baseline; promote rental and transportation opportunities in support of product development; prepare listing of cultural experiences to add to a primary eco-tourism adventure; compile and maintain planning resource materials at economic development and band offices for use by local entrepreneurs; support business development through establishment of group of business mentors and local financial experts.

- **Marketing:** establish clear market vision and position for the community; more cooperative marketing within the Bulkley region; encourage targeted product development; provide packaging assistance to smaller operators.

- **Training and Education**: distribute adventure tourism certification program information; recruit leaders and key partners to promote tourism career opportunities; gather and distribute training materials/resources for interested local entrepreneurs; examine delivery of viable entrepreneurship and skill development programs to encourage more First Nations businesses.

- **Infrastructure**: raise awareness of the importance of the local road infrastructure in the region for tourism purposes; work to ensure public air and bus linkages are complimentary and supportive of the region's tourism industry; investigate the further development of rail passenger service to the region; undertake a community recreation plan dedicated to trail system development with particular attention on integrated multi-use trail system.

Chapter

1

1 Introduction

The tourism industry is one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world economy. In BC, tourism is already the province's second largest industry – generating $9.2 billion in revenues with some 16,700 tourism-related businesses employing over 113,000 BC workers. British Columbia's tourism industry is expected to grow steadily over the next three years with the influence of the maturing baby boomer generation. With an increase in disposable income and leisure time, travel has become a priority for this segment of the population. There are also changes in the type of travel experiences being sought, with an increasing demand for specialty tours that cater to interests such as outdoor adventure, culture, education and wellness. Indeed, recent research would indicate that 'ecotourism' and 'adventure travel' is now the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry.

Many visitors to BC are already attracted to the province for its diverse natural beauty and outdoor recreational opportunities. Therefore, the province is perfectly poised to capitalize on the new opportunities for economic and employment growth possible from expansion in the ecotourism area. Rural BC communities, in particular, have a tremendous opportunity to expand and diversify their economic and employment base through land-based tourism development. Importantly, these opportunities for expansion in tourism are arriving at the same time that many rural BC communities are struggling with significant structural change in their traditional resource economies.

Recognizing both the challenges and opportunities presented by ecotourism expansion, the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism & Culture has developed a provincial Ecotourism Strategy as part of the provincial government's Green Economy Initiative. Meredith & Associates of Smithers was commissioned by the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture to undertake this Tourism Opportunity Study to identify opportunities for sustainable community-based outdoor recreation and backcountry eco/adventure tourism development in the Bulkley/Cassiar Forest District – Bulkley Plan Area.

1.1 Study Purpose

The Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture (MSBTC) has been contracting the preparation of tourism resource inventories (TRIs) with tourism capability modeling for over eight years. During that time, major strides have been made in the digital information available in the province, and planning efforts have been supported by ever-improving information. The entire province has been covered by tourism resource inventories at 1:250,000 and most of these have been updated within the past few years.

The TRIs are useful for land use planning of large regions, but more detailed information is required to assist with local area planning, both community and tourism business development. Information is needed to specifically lay a foundation for future economically, socially and environmentally feasible tourism opportunities. This will provide support for community-led tourism development within forest recreation areas and on other Crown and private land.

The information obtained through this project will improve on existing Tourism Resource Inventory (TRI) and Forest Recreation Resource Inventory (FRRI) data and will enable government to support the efforts of individuals, municipal governments, First Nations and tourism and recreation associations to:

- Diversify local economies;
- Maintain access to recreational resources for local residents; and
- Minimize conflicts among resource users.

The purpose of this project is to:

- Update and enhance existing FRRI and TRI data;
- Conduct research and analysis that will identify land and resource issues that have a bearing on tourism and recreation development;
- Based on the above-two steps, identify the best opportunities for ecotourism and adventure travel development and make recommendations for their support and development; and
- Prepare an Action Plan that communities and government agencies can undertake to develop tourism opportunities in the region.

As the provincial tourism industry grows, demand for the Super, Natural experiences that have become the signature tourism product for the province will continue to increase. This study should contribute to integrated resource and community planning targeted towards economic, social and environmental sustainability. In addition to identifying key opportunities for tourism development, this report identifies important issues and constraints that threaten the potential for tourism growth in the study area.

The analysis is not meant to be either exclusive or exhaustive. The study's objective is to identify those products with the best development capability based on a combination of natural resource, market potential and local suitability. The ultimate value of this project is in identifying key opportunities and actions required to assist in the priority-setting of key players in tourism planning, and in providing further direction to communities, business people and organizations involved in tourism development in the region.

1.2 Scope and Methodology

The primary focus of this study's analysis is on commercial outdoor recreation in the Bulkley Plan Area and the surrounding lands, which are of interest to the Wet'suwet'en First Nations.

There were four major objectives for this project:

1. Prepare an inventory of tourism operators, facilities, features, areas of use and infrastructure

- Build on existing Forest Recreation and Tourism Resource Inventory (TRI) data
- Use existing data and previous studies where available
- Use first hand interviews and surveys of area tourism operators
- Identify land and resource issues with a bearing on tourism development
- Provide summary statistics on existing tourism activities

2. Create maps outlining the potential of the natural resource base to support defined tourism activities

- Identify up to 10 products/activities deemed to have the best suitability for development
- Review the 1996 Northwest TRI product capability modelling
- Prepare an initial set of maps by adjusting the baseline using a feature-based methodology
- Modify product maps with input from industry and local community experts
- Incorporate constraints where applicable and available

3. Undertake an economics-based analysis of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

- Use latest market research plus information gathered through surveys and interviews
- Incorporate results of inventory compilation
- Describe tourism opportunities in 10 tourism product areas

4. Prepare a local ecotourism development Action Plan

- Consult with local stakeholders including elected officials, planning agencies, community groups, First Nations, tourism operators and recreational organizations
- Incorporate local concerns, constraints and issues about tourism planning
- Prepare action plans which communities could follow in developing their tourism economies

The **work steps** for this project included the following:

- Establishment of a **Local Advisory Committee** (LAC) to guide the study and provide an opportunity for community involvement in the TOS.
- **Review of previous studies** and summary of tourism opportunities.
- **Survey** of tourism operators, recreation groups, and agencies to identify information on existing operations and tourism opportunities. A total of 93 tourism contacts were identified as based in or operating in the study area. The response rate through survey and telephone interviews was 27%.

- **Data compilation —** collect, update, refine and organize information from government agencies and tourism operators.
- **Preliminary product and community analysis report** to identify key tourism opportunities.
- **Status report and maps** summarizing process and preliminary results.
- **Detailed tourism analysis** identifying opportunities and related information in more detail, with specific implementation recommendations submitted as Draft Report.
- **Final report and data** incorporating all reports, analysis, and map folios. Digital mapping format to provincial standards.

1.3 Report Structure

This report is organized into seven (7) overall Sections along with four (4) Annexes. The 'flow' of the document is as follows:

- ***Section 1*** – provides an *introduction* to the overall project;
- ***Section 2*** – provides an introduction and review of the *British Columbia tourism industry*, including a discussion of ecotourism trends;
- ***Section 3*** – provides a review and analysis of the *Bulkley Plan Area*, its tourism resources as well as statistics regarding visitors to Northwestern BC;
- ***Section 4*** – provides a review of the *Wet'suwet'en First Nation* in the study area;
- ***Section 5*** – provides a review and analysis of *land use planning and resource management* in the study area;
- ***Section 6*** – provides a review and analysis of *tourism resources in the Bulkley Plan;*
- ***Section 7*** – entails a detailed analysis of the most viable *tourism opportunities* within the study area; and
- ***Section 8*** – reviews *tourism issues* in the study area and goes on to provide *tourism development recommendations*.

- ***Annex A*** – contains the results of the tourism stakeholder survey and corresponding analysis of existing tourism operations;
- ***Annex B*** – contains tourism product pre-feasibility profiles for seven potential tourism products;
- ***Annex C*** – provides a list of acronyms used in this report; and
- ***Annex D*** – is a bibliography of resources used.

Chapter 2

2 The BC Tourism Industry

The tourism industry within British Columbia is a vital and vibrant component of the British Columbia economy. The following statistics set the stage and assist in highlighting the need for effective tourism planning throughout the province[3].

2.1 Expenditures

Tourism revenue totalled $9.2 billion in 1999, a 4.9% increase over 1998. A major component of this growth came from the US market (up 6.8%), whose tourism expenditures injected a total of $2.3 billion into the provincial economy. Positive revenue growth in 1999 was also seen from the British Columbia, Canadian and European markets, up 1.5%, 3.2% and 9.3% respectively. The above revenue increases was concurrent with an increase of 11.1% from the Asia/Pacific region. Visitor spending among key markets varied with the length of stay and per day expenditures. For example, British Columbia residents represented 48% of total visitor volume last year but only 26% of the revenue as they spend less on average per visit than the longer haul visitor[4]. Conversely, overseas visitors contributed 18% of the total revenue while representing only 7% of the volume.

2.2 Target Market Volumes

In 1999, British Columbia hosted 22.3 million overnight visitors an increase of 2.1% from 1998. Nearly half (48%) of these visitors were British Columbia residents. Travelers from other parts of Canada accounted for 4.8 million visits (21.7%) a 1.7% increase over the previous year. A strong US economy, a growing awareness of British Columbia as a preferred travel destination and a very favourable exchange rate combined to lure Americans to British Columbia in record numbers in 1999. There was a 5.3% increase over 1998 and a 37% increase since 1994. South Korea and Taiwan were the Asia/Pacific countries to show the strongest positive growth in 1999, up 61.6% and -29.3% respectively. More Europeans visited British Columbia in 1999 (up 7.8%), driven mainly by the 12% growth from the UK market. The number of UK visits topped 267,000, nearly doubling the second largest market of Germany with 134,000.

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[3] Statistics in this section are sourced from The Value of Tourism, Research Services Branch of Tourism British Columbia, February 2001.

[4] This does not account for any 'outfitting' expenditures BC residents spend in pursuing their various recreational activities (i.e.: equipment, clothing, education, skill development, etc.)

2.3 Employment in 1999

In the past, employment in the tourism industry was estimated through employment levels in tourism-related industries. More recently, direct employment data has become available, providing a more accurate count of the number of British Columbians employed directly as a result of tourism activity.

In 1999, this figure is estimated at 110,780 people[5], accounting for approximately 7.6% of the provincial labour force and ranking fifth in provincial employment among industry sectors. Tourism employment in British Columbia accounts for approximately 1-in-13 jobs in the province.

The Accommodation and Food & Beverage sectors accounted for approximately 26.0% and 26.9%, respectively, of tourism jobs in 1999. Other key sectors, in terms of tourism employment, were Retail & Wholesale Trade, which accounted for 19.1% of tourism jobs, and Transportation & Communication at 15.3%.

2.3.1 Growth in Tourism Employment

Tourism employment rose 12.1% in the 10year period from 1990 to 1999. The Food & Beverage sector led the growth in tourism employment, up 41.7% over 1990, while employment in the travel services sector declined by 26.7% during the same period.

2.3.2 Wages and Salaries

In 1999, wages and salaries in the tourism industry totalled $2.3 billion[6], which accounted for5.0% of the provincial total of $47.3 billion. Of this total (which does not include tips or gratuities), 30.6% ($717 million) was earned in the Transportation, Storage & Communication sector, followed by Retail ($482 million) and Accommodation ($443 million) sectors.

The average weekly earnings within the tourism industry in 1999 was $423, down 0.8% from 1998. Of all sectors, Transportation, Storage & Communication workers averaged the highest weekly earnings ($815) followed by Travel Services ($504) and Retail & Wholesale Trade ($437).

2.3.3 Tourism-Related Business Establishments

Another indicator of the level of tourism activity is the number of business establishments in tourism-related industries.

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[5] It should be noted that this figure does not include British Columbians who were self-employed in the tourism industry.

[6] 1999 figures are preliminary. BC Stats has changed methodology for estimating direct employment for all sectors and has provided historical tourism employment data, which represent these changes. TBC estimated the accommodation portion of tourism employment since a complete estimate was not available from Statistics Canada.

In 1999 there were 17,075 tourism-related business establishments operating in BC, up about 2.2% from 1998. Tourism-related business establishments accounted for approximately 1 in 9 of the province's 155,000 business establishments.

Nearly 9,400 – just over half – of the tourism-related businesses were in the Food & Beverage sector, which was down slightly from 1998 (-0.4%). There were just under 1,900 accommodation properties, accounting for 10.9% of all tourism-related businesses.

2.4 Tourism GDP

Tourism Gross Domestic Product (GDP) provides a direct measure of the industry's economic impact on the provincial economy and permits comparisons with other industries. In essence, Tourism GDP measures the value added to the provincial economy by the tourism industry. This value added is equal to the revenue earned by the tourism industry less the cost of inputs either imported or purchased from other BC industries.

The Value of Tourism[7] reports GDP in both constant (1992) dollars and current dollars. Using constant dollars removes the impact of inflation and provides a clearer indication of real changes in economic activity. However, using GDP measured in constant dollars to make comparisons across industries understates the growth rate of industries whose prices have risen more rapidly than average as one gets further away from the base year (1992). Thus, both current and constant dollar GDP are useful when making comparisons across industries.

Based on a 1992 constant dollar, Tourism GDP rose 0.7% in 1998, over the previous year, to a total of $4.3 billion. Growth in Tourism GDP outpaced growth in provincial GDP, which was up 0.3% over 1997. In 1998, tourism accounted for 4.8% of the total provincial GDP of $89 billion. In terms of current dollars, Tourism GDP was $4.9 billion in 1998. Compared to resource-based industries, Tourism GDP was greater than that of Agriculture ($2.1 billion) and Fishing ($0.5 billion), and less than Forestry ($6.8 billion).

Tourism grew significantly in the ten-year period from 1989 to 1998. Using current dollars, Tourism GDP grew 57.4% from 1989 to 1998 while Agriculture grew 41.3%, Forestry decreased 2.5% and Fishing fell 13.3%. Tourism GDP grew from 45.1% of Forestry GDP in 1989 to 72.7% in 1998.

While useful for cross-industry comparisons, current dollar GDP overstates real growth rates because it does not account for inflation. Using constant dollars, Tourism GDP rose 22.7% between 1989 and 1998. Using constant dollars, Tourism growth since 1989 has outpaced Agriculture, which rose 17.7%, Forestry, down 25.7% and Fishing down 46.5%. Using constant dollar GDP, Tourism GDP has grown from 56.1% of Forestry GDP in 1989 to 92.7% in 1998.

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[7] Research Services, Tourism British Columbia, February 2001.

2.5 Tourism: The Importer of the Export Sector

Whereas traditional export industries ship commodities to markets in other countries, in tourism the consumers (markets) travel to British Columbia to purchase the product – *Super Natural* British Columbia. In 1999, $4.0 billion of BC's tourism revenue was earned in foreign exchange. This was an increase of 8.2% over 1998 and a 35.5% increase since 1995.

Last year, tourism was the second-largest earner of export income in the provincial economy, after wood products. Tourism earned more export income than machinery and equipment, metallic minerals, agriculture and food, and fish products.

2.6 Tourism and Rural Job Creation

Clearly, tourism is a prime growth engine for rural British Columbia because it can create new and relatively stable long-term jobs for local residents[8]. This is significant considering that most North American tourism destinations have enjoyed stable or expanding markets for several decades, at a time when primary resource industries have experienced cyclical, and too often permanent, downturns in jobs. Tourism jobs are readily accessible to local residents, as they often require a familiarity with the region. Many tourism jobs are seasonal, which can be a disadvantage for those seeking full-time work. (Although as BC's tourism industry matures and diversifies its products, many locations and businesses are becoming multi-seasonal.) On the other hand, seasonal and part-time work can be well suited to people who do not want full-time work, such as students and working parents. Tourism is particularly important as a generator of youth, entry-level jobs. As well, the expanding tourism market offers opportunities for career advancement into supervisory and managerial positions for many young people.

In addition, it is worth noting that the vast majority of tourism businesses in British Columbia are managed and operated by independent owner-operators. Approximately 90% of all tourism businesses consist of one or two owners and less than five staff. Therefore, the opportunity to develop and run your own business is one of the great benefits of the industry. Along with this owner-operator structure comes the added bonus of determining one's own unique lifestyle – a benefit that owner-operators are very quick to state as their main incentive in getting into the business.

2.7 Tourism and Regional Economic Development

Tourism is important to the economic diversification and health of many rural BC communities. Unlike other land-based industries, tourism imports the market to the product, rather than export the product out of region to distant markets. As such tourism serves as a vital element in the trade within local and regional economies. Tourism is the only industry with a positive net flow of funds from wealthier to poorer regions, and from urban to rural communities. Because of the nature of the tourism sector, the majority of the money spent is imported from other geographic regions, and is new to the host community. As a result studies show that tourism revenue can result in a five to seven times multiplier effect in local communities[9].

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[8] Cited in: Jobs and Environment — Moving British Columbia into the 21st Century, BC Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, 1999.

Tourism in rural areas also acts as a 'recruiting' device, attracting new permanent residents and businesses to an area. Hence, tourism can be an important element in revitalizing the local economy by putting the spotlight on the community and emphasizing its attractive features. Tourism expenditures also support construction, public administration, professional, and medical and educational services; none of which are low paying. Tourism also provides exceptional lifestyle and entrepreneurial opportunities. In fact, tourism has the highest owner/operator ratio of any sector in British Columbia. The number of tourism-related businesses in BC grew over 50% in 6 years, from less than 10,000 in 1990, to more than 15,700 in 1996. In places like Tofino, Whistler, the Okanagan Valley, Invermere and Nelson, tourism is the leading sector of the economy.

2.8 Ecotourism and Activity Trends

Ecotourism is that component of the tourism industry that focuses on the experiencing of natural or indigenous culture in a way that minimizes impacts. Ecotourism appeals to a global market, particularly well educated, affluent, urban residents from developed countries. BC's high quality and diverse natural scenery offer the competitive conditions for the province's expanding eco-adventure tourism sector.

Tourism BC estimates the value of ecotourism to be $350 million annually[10]. Significant as this is, as important is the fact that BC rates as a top adventure tourism destination in North America11. Ecotourism is the fastest growing segment of the BC tourism sector. Furthermore, the opportunities for expansion of BC's ecotourism sector are substantial. This is important given that one-half of U.S. adults – or 98 million persons – took an adventure vacation within the past five years. A recent national survey of the ecotourism and adventure tourism sector in Canada concluded that "Canada's natural environment, encompassing vast unspoiled wilderness areas and spectacular scenery is ideally suited to the development of adventure travel and ecotourism and is already the basis of an internationally competitive product base."

2.8.1 The Evolving Adventure/Ecotourism Experience

The outdoor adventure/ecotourism market is expanding, but it is also changing in substantive ways. The outdoor adventure experience encompasses four major characteristics: (a) involvement with a natural environment, (b) elements of risk and danger, (c) uncertain outcome, and (d) influenced by the participant or circumstance (Exhibit 1). These components serve to separate adventure recreation from other forms of recreational activities. The adventure experience can also vary along a number of dimensions including type of travel, group membership, and/or amount and spectrum of risk. This variance is illustrated in the preceding figure. The adventure travel industry uses potential risk as a parameter in categorizing adventure activities into hard or soft activities. Most operators are now familiar with this terminology but have to be increasingly aware of further fracturing and the implications this will have for both product and market development.

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[9] Shoaf, W. "Sundance". Article for Business Coalition for Sustainable Cities, at www.earthpledge.org/progress/wpapers/wpsundan.html

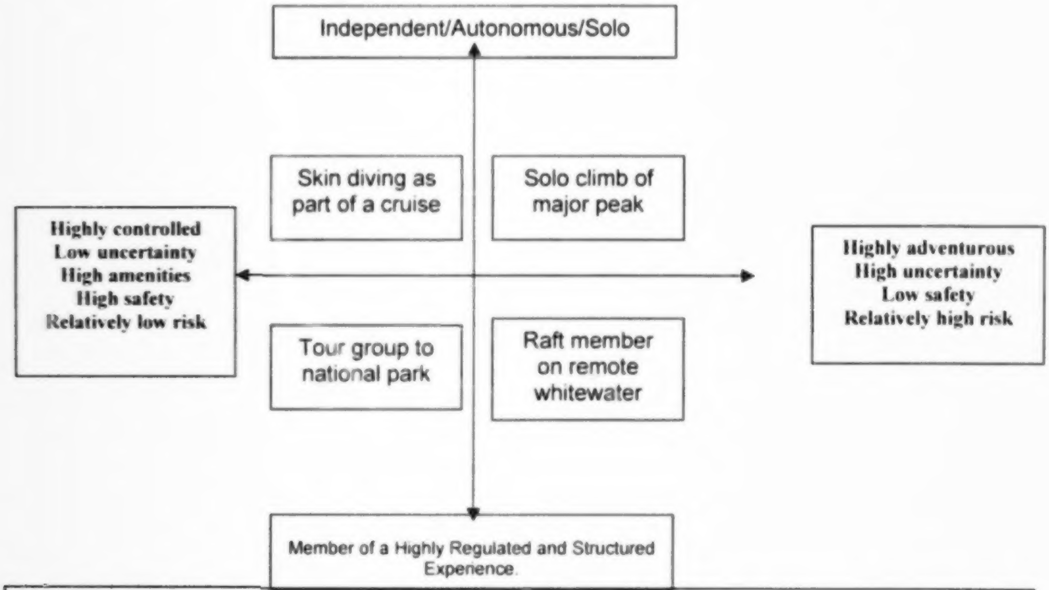
[10] Tourism BC.

[11] Travel Industry Association of America. January 1998. The Adventure Travel Report, 1997.

2.8.2 Access and Opportunities

Access and opportunity is paramount to adventure recreation and since the bulk of the land base is Crown land, provincial land managers usually determine these. Allowable activities, acceptable practices and facilities are the three main parameters determining what activity occurs and where. Adventure activities are increasingly seen as a legitimate use of Crown lands but it has only been in the very recent past that multiple-use concepts have even been mentioned in the policy framework. The industry, and communities which rely on the related economic benefits, have to ensure that adventure tourism interests have a rightful place within the land and resource management regime.

Exhibit 1: The Adventure Tourism Experience


Independent/Autonomous/Solo
Skin diving as part of a cruise
Solo climb of major peak
Highly controlled
Low uncertainty
High amenities
High safety
Relatively low risk
Highly adventurous
High uncertainty
Low safety
Relatively high risk
Tour group to national park
Raft member on remote whitewater
Member of a Highly Regulated and Structured Experience

Source: Trends in Outdoor Recreation: Programs, Experiences and Issues, Alan W. Ewert, Indiana University, 2000

2.8.3 Technology

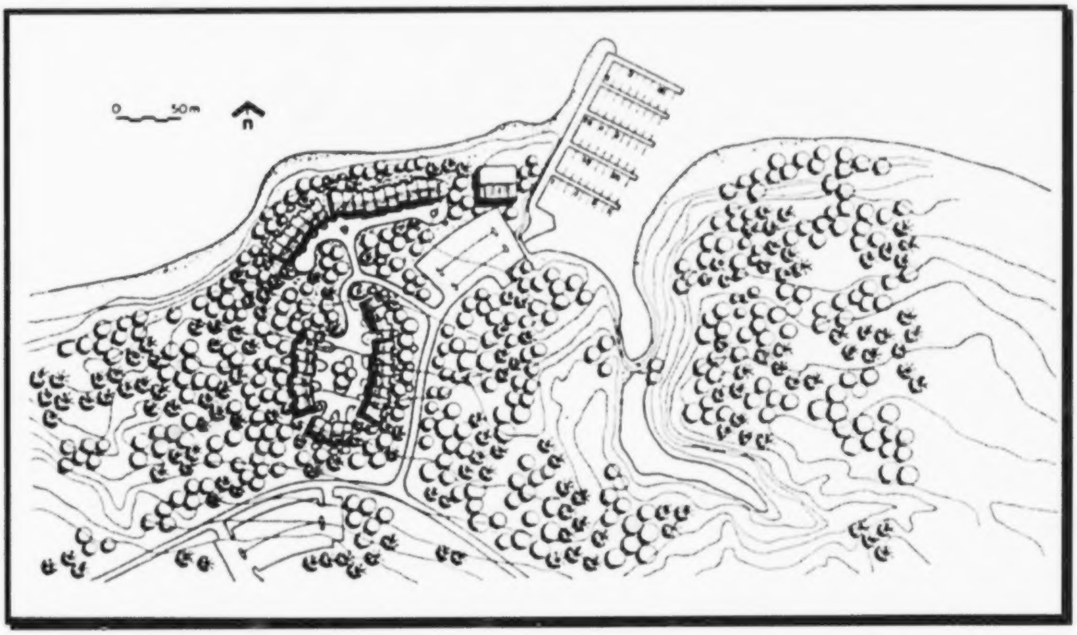
In general, technological innovations, whether equipment or clothing-oriented, impact the adventure recreation experience in five ways: access/transportation, comfort, safety, communication, and information. This has enabled lesser skilled participants to participate in activities at the more extreme end of the spectrum. In the end, this will continue to increase participation and open up new opportunities for business and market development.

2.8.4 Societal Acceptance

A number of emerging trends suggest that outdoor adventure recreation is becoming much more accepted by the public than has previously been the case. Coverage by the mass media, the growth of adventure programs for therapeutic intent and the growth of training programs that incorporate adventure activities are some examples of how pervasive outdoor activities have become. This will not only increase participation, demand and business opportunities, but place tremendous pressure on land managers to actively manage for tourism values when this has not occurred in the past.

2.8.5 Implications for Tourism Development in the Study Area

Future tourism growth in Canada and British Columbia will be driven by interest in outdoor experiences, particularly those in the soft adventure market and ecotourism. The Bulkley region has many of the attributes needed to appeal to these markets but development will depend on key responses. Operators must understand the risk-reward relationship and provide the features and amenities, which have the strongest appeal for local travel markets, which tend to be in the soft adventure category. They must incorporate technology and innovation so as to broaden market appeal for activities in demand, and improve their own competitiveness. They must seek greater cooperation with land managers and communities to ensure the Crown land base recognizes the demands and needs of tourism as a legitimate resource user. Communities must play a more prominent role by furnishing infrastructure and support services that underpin the industry and the employment and regional income benefits it can bring to local residents.



Chapter 3

3 Bulkley TOS Plan Area

3.1 Introduction

The Bulkley TOS Plan Area[12] (Exhibit 2) – which is a very accessible tourism destination – is in a prime area of BC for tourism development. The area has magnificent scenic resources with abundant natural and pristine wilderness areas. The region has diverse opportunities for mountain and river recreation, camping, wildlife viewing, and a range of other tourism and recreation activities. A range of attractions, parks, and facilities, which can cater to tourism and recreational needs, supports these resources. However, tourism products targeted at the outdoor, adventure, culture and heritage tourism markets do not at present meet market demands. The opportunity to better capture this market through product development, enhanced tourism services and marketing is strong.

Enhanced tourism development offers regions such as the Bulkley area – where traditional resource dependant industries are experiencing a decline due to automation, soft markets and/or decreasing resource supply – yet one more opportunity to further diversify its economy. Tourism is a resource based industry which is experiencing substantial growth. The 1995/96 BC visitor survey conducted by the Ministry of Small Business Tourism and Culture indicates that travelers are staying longer and spending more money when they travel within BC. Another key finding of the survey is that travelers are visiting more regions within BC. For the study area this means that more visitors are coming to the area. This increased tourism activity within the region translates into economic opportunities for the region. However, in order to fully benefit from this increase in tourism activity, tourism development must occur to provide the visitor with things to do while visiting the region. This in turn will encourage the visitor to stay longer within the region, resulting in an increase in tourism revenue. The benefits of enhanced tourism development in the Study area will be realized through increased employment opportunities in the region, and a higher level of entrepreneurial and income-generating opportunities.

The study area, with its attractive natural features, is in a prime position to benefit from this market surge. However, this will require well-designed and executed product development.

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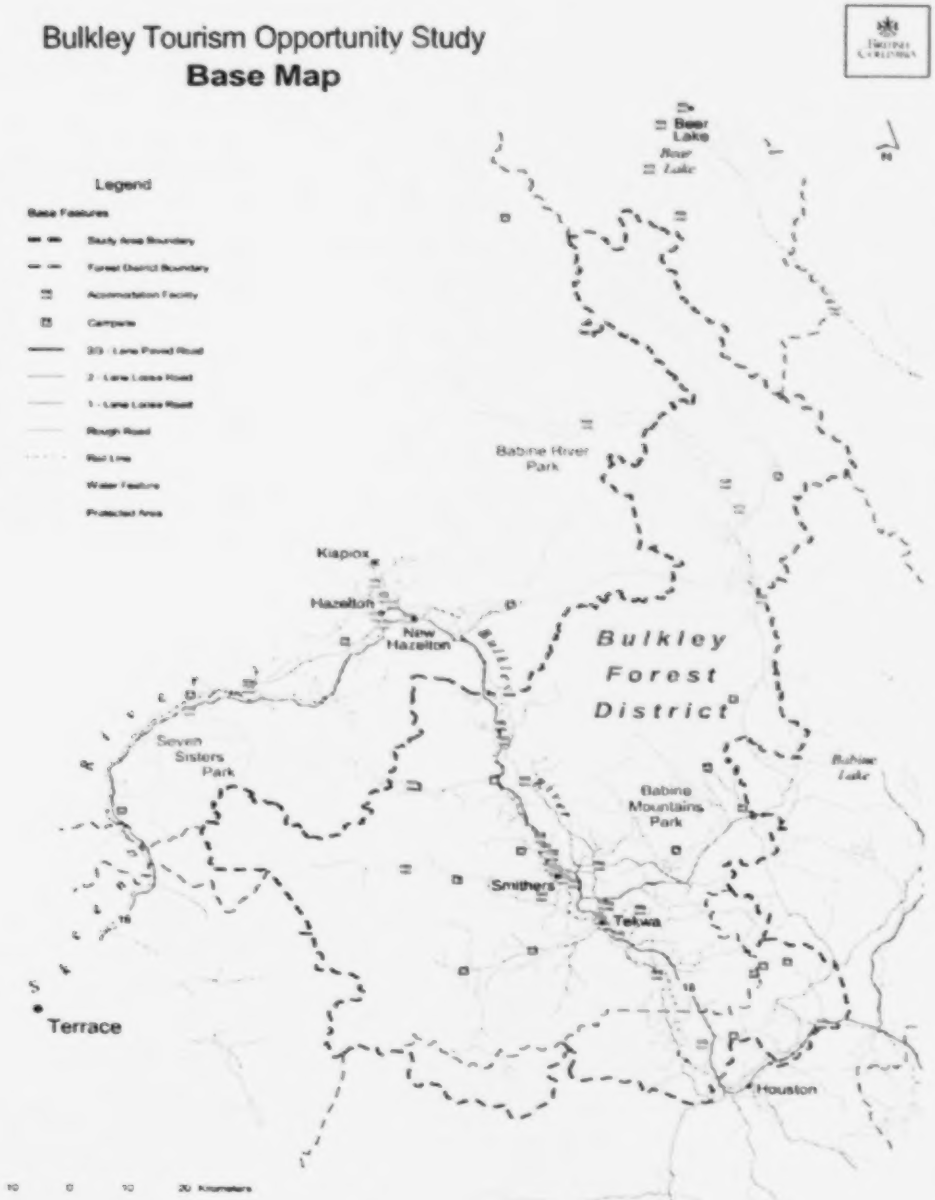
[12] The Bulkley Plan Area operates within the Bulkley portion of the Bulkley/Cassiar Forest District in west-central BC.

Exhibit 2: Bulkley TOS Plan Area


Bulkley Tourism Opportunity Study
Base Map
Legend
Base Features
Study Area Boundary
Forest District Boundary
Accommodation Facility
Campsite
2/3 - Lane Paved Road
2 - Lane Loose Road
1 - Lane Loose Road
Rough Road
Rail Line
Water Feature
Protected Area
Bear Lake
Bear Lake
Babine River Park
Kispiox
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Bulkley Forest District
Seven Sisters Park
Babine Lake
Babine Mountains Park
Smithers
Telkwa
Houston
Terrace
16
16
N
10 0 10 20 Kilometers

3.2 Land Base

The study area is the Bulkley Timber Supply Area (TSA) boundaries. The Bulkley TSA, covering 762,000 hectares, is one of seven TSAs in the Prince Rupert Forest Region. It is located in the eastern side of the Skeena watershed and is bounded by the Telkwa River watershed in the south and by the headwaters of the Nilkitkwa River in the north. The Bulkley Valley lies within the southern portion of the district and contains the major population concentration, including the communities of Smithers (1998 estimated population 6,073), Telkwa (1995 estimated population 1,199) and Moricetown (1991 population 650).

3.3 Community Economic and Social Profile

3.3.1 Population

The Ministry of Forests has estimated the Bulkley TSA's population at about 11,515 – a 10.1 percent increase over the 1986 estimated population of 10,460. In comparison, the growth in BC's population during the same period was 13.8 percent. According to estimates compiled by the BC Ministry of Government Services, the combined population of Smithers and Telkwa increased by 1,000 (17.0 percent) between 1991 and 1995. These communities are benefiting from a broader provincial trend that has seen several small communities with attractive quality of life characteristics experiencing stronger population growth than the provincial average.

A sizable proportion – about 49 percent – of the Bulkley TSA population is outside of municipal boundaries in rural areas. Growth in rural areas is about 15 percent verses 5.6 percent for the communities of Smithers and Telkwa.

3.3.2 Economic Base

Forestry, mining, tourism, agriculture and the public sector form the economic base in the area. Forestry is the most dominant industry, accounting for about 23 per cent of the basic sector income in the Bulkley Plan Area[13].

Total provincial government revenues – including personal taxes, corporate taxes, sales taxes, range fees, etc. – are approximately $34.20 million from forestry, agriculture, mining, fisheries and tourism. Forestry clearly provides the largest share at a total of about $31.18 million with stumpage, rents and royalties of $19.69 million providing the largest share of this total. Tourism provides the second largest amount of provincial government revenues at $1.84 million. Personal income taxes are the largest contributor to this figure at $0.76 million. Agriculture, mining and fisheries each provide about $0.93 million, $0.15 million and $0.01 million, respectively, in provincial government revenues.[14]

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[13] Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan, Bulkley Valley Community Resources Board, March 1998.

[14] Figures accurate as of 1998.

3.3.2.1 TOURISM INDUSTRY ANALYSIS

Exhibit 3 provides an estimate of the experienced tourism labour force in the Bulkley TSA in 1991. Actual Person Years of tourism employment would be less than the estimated total tourism labour force of 457, after accounting for unemployment and part-time jobs. In comparison, a 1992 economic impact study of the Smithers/Telkwa area tourism industry estimated 315 PYs in 1989.

Historically, the tourism industry in the Smithers/Telkwa area has consisted of accommodation and food facilities, which catered to highway travelers. In recent years, there has been an expansion of businesses catering to outdoor/adventure tourists. A 1992 study on tourism in the Smithers/Telkwa area identified 87 businesses that are tourist dependent and another 83 businesses that are tourist related[15] [The ARA Consulting Group, Inc. March 1992]. Of the tourist dependent businesses, 68 were outdoor/adventure companies whose product relies on the natural resources of the immediate area and of areas as far away as the Spatsizi Wilderness Area. These companies typically deal with less than 20 clients at any one time. The other 19 businesses in this category offered accommodation of some sort and generally serve a larger number of clients. Fourteen of these businesses are hotels and motels providing a total of about 400 units.

Exhibit 3: Bulkley TSA Tourism Labour Force, 1991

SECTOR	TOTAL BULKLEY TSA LABOUR FORCE	PERCENTAGE OF LABOUR FORCE	TOTAL TOURISM LABOUR FORCE
Accommodation & Food Services	375	51.1%	192
Transportation & Storage	540	26.8	145
Retail Trade	900	8.3	75
Communications	80	2.2	2
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	165	1.1	2
Other Services	400	10.2	41
Total	**2,460**	**100%**	**457**

3.3.2.2 TOURISM BUSINESS TAXES

Operating surplus averages were calculated from a survey of tourism businesses in and around Smithers/Telkwa [The ARA Consulting Group Inc. 1992] and were equal to 33 percent for outdoor tourism and 20 percent for accommodation. The same study was used to determine total revenues based on revenues per person year of employment applied to employment figures calculated for the Bulkley TSA[16]. These revenue totals were $8.8 million and $6.7 million for outdoor and accommodation, respectively, after adjustment by BC's CPI. Business taxes are based on three percent of operating surpluses [G.E. Bridges & Associates Inc 1995].

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[15] A tourist dependent business is dependent on tourism for their main source of revenue and a tourist related business serves tourists but 'tourism' is not their main source of revenue.

[16] Ibid. Footnote #13

3.3.3 Tourism Resources

The tourism industry in the Bulkley Plan Area, particularly outdoor/adventure tourism, has become a significant and growing component of the local economy. Although tourism ranks below forestry in terms of employment and employment income, it represents one possible opportunity for economic development in the area. Smithers – located halfway between Prince George and Prince Rupert – is an overnight or refreshment stop for highway travelers. Traffic volumes continue to grow due to highway improvements and the growing number of ferry passengers embarking or disembarking at Prince Rupert. Furthermore, Smithers benefits from being located along one of two highway routes to Alaska and has direct air access to major urban centres. Recently, the tourism industry in the Smithers and Telkwa area has expanded into the outdoor/adventure market. The area is well endowed with scenic attractions and abundant wildlife populations, making it extremely well suited to both winter and summer outdoor/adventure tourism activities.

3.3.4 Bulkley Tourism Attributes

A 1991 study of tourism in Northwestern BC revealed that tourism in this area is linked to the area's natural features, particularly for the non-resident component. According to 1989 figures, 27 percent of resident travelers and 59 percent of non-resident travelers had a trip purpose that was natural resource-based. The Bulkley TSA has exceptional natural attributes that make the area attractive to both resident and non-resident travelers. They are as follows:

- High quality recreational fishing opportunities including two Class 1 rivers (Babine & Zymoetz) and six class 2 rivers.
- Abundant and diverse wildlife, including grizzly bear, caribou and goat populations which provide excellent opportunities for wildlife viewing and hunting;
- Numerous mountain ranges and valleys offering a variety of opportunities for a broad range of outdoor activities, including rock climbing, ice climbing, hiking, trail riding, cross-country skiing and downhill skiing; and,
- Numerous lakes and rivers offering a variety of opportunities for water-based recreation including kayaking, canoeing, rafting and fishing.

The Bulkley's natural attributes indicate potential to expand the tourism industry, but other areas in BC have similar attributes and compete for market share. Southern regions have the advantage of being easily accessible from the province's large population centres. However, the Bulkley area offers wilderness opportunities which are diminishing as resources are developed in the more accessible regions of the province. If wilderness opportunities in the Bulkley are maintained the region's appeal to visitors may increase.

3.3.5 Outdoor & Adventure Tourism Operations

In the North by Northwest Tourism Region[17], outdoor/adventure tourism products (guide outfitting, fishing lodges and resorts, and other adventure activities) represented 14 percent of all non-resident visitor activity in 1991. This was six percent above the BC average. In the Smithers/Telkwa area, 50 percent of revenues for tourist dependent business was either derived from hunting, sportfishing or wilderness activities (Exhibit 4).

Some of these businesses are located outside TSA boundaries, but, as in the mining industry, Smithers/Telkwa is used as a staging area for clients. Operators may specialize in one type of product or they may offer a variety of products at one site. These operators typically offer services to only a few clients at any one time and therefore the number of clients served annually is quite small [The ARA Consulting Group Inc. March, 1992]. The potential for growth in this sector will depend, in part, on maintaining high quality mid and back-country recreational experiences.

Exhibit 4: Revenue Source for Tourist Dependent Businesses – Smithers/Telkwa Area, 1989

Source	Percent of Total Revenues
Sportfishing	27
Winter	22
Hunting	20
Touring	8
Business Travel	8
Wilderness	3
Other	13
Total	**100%**

Source: The ARA Consulting Group Inc., March, 1992

There are at least 12 fishing lodges in the Bulkley TSA, 10 of which rely on fishing as the primary tourism experience. These lodges attract clients primarily from western Canada (48 percent of clients) and the US (41 percent) [Ministry of Forests 1994]. The sports fishing and fishing lodge industry is largely dependent on fishing quality, but scenic beauty and remoteness are also features which clients rate highly. The northwest region is famous for its trophy-sized steelhead from the Skeena system, which includes the Babine and Bulkley Rivers. Rainbow trout are also a prized species. As with guide-outfitting, increasing access to remote areas will reduce the wilderness quality of the sports fishing product. This could have an impact on fishing lodge operations. Another contentious issue that will affect the sports fishing lodges is allocation of fish between commercial, aboriginal and local recreational fisheries. Currently, the local Steelhead Association is concerned about declining steelhead populations and the possible link to commercial fishing at the mouth of the Skeena.

The Bulkley TSA is divided into five guide-outfitting territories. Hunting opportunities include moose, deer, wolf, mountain goat, caribou, grizzly and black bear. It is estimated that approximately 81 percent of Northwestern BC guide-outfitter clients are from the US. The main concern of guide-outfitters is maintaining wilderness hunting experiences for the international market. As more roads go into these areas (from timber harvesting and mining exploration and development), hunting activity by local residents could increase. This could lead to more hunting pressures which would affect guide-outfitter operations.

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[17] In about 1997 the North By Northwest Tourism region was amalgamated with the Peace River Alaska Highway Tourism Association to become the Northern British Columbia Tourism Association.

The interest in adventure tourism has stimulated growth in the number of businesses offering unique adventure tourism products. Some guide-outfitters and fishing lodge operators are becoming involved in adventure tourism as well. Adventure tourism products, which are viable in the Bulkley, include:

- ice climbing, ski mountaineering and rock climbing courses and packages;
- day trip or week long dog sled excursions;
- rafting and canoeing trips;
- guided snowmobile tours;
- guided trail rides;
- guided day hikes and backpacking tours;
- outdoor education programs; and
- guided back-country skiing.

These operations rely on a relatively unspoiled natural resource base. To date, the scenic, wildlife and wilderness attributes of the area have made it a viable contender in the outdoor/adventure tourism market. However, increased access and resource development may reduce the potential for this component of the tourism industry to provide stable jobs and income in the long-term.

3.3.5.1 SKIING & SNOWBOARDING

In addition to the activities and products noted above, Ski Smithers, a downhill skiing & snowboarding operation is located 26 kilometer's from the town of Smithers. The total economic impact of the operation was estimated to be between $6 and $8 million in 1987 [The ARA Consulting Group Inc. March, 1992]. Hudson Bay Mountain is promoted as one of the best downhill skiing areas in north central BC due to the long, reliable ski season, mix of ski terrain, and excellent snow conditions. Its popularity is reflected in an increasing volume of winter tourist trade, primarily from communities in the Prince George - Prince Rupert corridor. There exists a unique and charming 'cabin community' on the skill hill with about 130 cabins nestled in the woods. They range from very rustic to family cabins with power. Many cabin owners live outside the Bulkley Valley. There is one B&B on-hill which can accommodate up to 14 -16 guests and offers all the amenities including full course dinners and a covered hot tub[19]. The hill presently attracts approximately 40 – 43,000 skier/boarder-days per season.

3.3.5.2 TOURING

Communities in the Bulkley TSA are situated on the Yellowhead Highway 16 and have therefore benefited from touring traffic using this route to Alaska and the Inside Passage. Future growth in the touring market is uncertain – higher gas prices and the popularity of resort destination travel is resulting in a decline in touring. However, due to their location en route to Alaska and the Inside Passage (increasingly popular travel destinations), it may be expected that activity in Bulkley TSA communities from this type of travel could continue at present levels or even grow. Motor coach travel, primarily Americans and Europeans, either Alaska-bound or travelling the circle tour from Vancouver, has been growing in Smithers/Telkwa in recent years. This market places a high value on visual quality of the landscape.

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[19] Windsong B&B

3.3.5.3 TRENDS

For the Bulkley TSA, tourism growth will continue to be tied to the touring and wilderness/adventure markets, with the best opportunities in the latter. Guided wilderness, fishing and hunting products should continue to grow but the prime opportunity may be in the soft adventure market, which demands an active outdoor experience but generally is a non-consumer of wildlife and fish. Hiking, rafting, mountain biking, wildlife viewing, mountaineering and wilderness tours will grow in the future, providing the necessary tourism attributes remain sound. Clearly, the natural resources of the Bulkley TSA are the basis for the development of the wilderness/adventure and resort sectors, both now and in the future.

3.3.6 First Nations in the Bulkley Plan Area

3.3.6.1 BANDS, RESERVES, AND POPULATIONS

The Bulkley TSA is part of the traditional territories of the Gitxsan, Wet'suwet'en, Nat'oot'en and Tsimshian peoples.[19] Only the Wet'suwet'en and Nat'oot'en have permanent communities in the Bulkley TSA.

The Wet'suwet'en territory is 22,000 sq. kms. and includes the communities of: Moricetown, Nee-Tahi-Buhn, Skin-Tyee, Hagwilget and Wet'suwet'en First Nation (formerly Broman Lake Band). The Nee-Tahi-Buhn, Skin-Tyee and Hagwilget bands are located in Burns Lake and New Hazelton, respectively. The community of Moricetown is made up of several small reserves and is situated along the Bulkley River northwest of Smithers. According to treaty information, the total population of the Wet'suwet'en is 2,086 [Treaty Update Northwest Team March 1, 1996]. The total population of the Moricetown Band was estimated to be 1,357 in 1991, but according to treaty estimates, this has increased in recent years.

The Nat'oot'en people of Fort Babine are part of the Lake Babine Band whose main office is in Burns Lake. The community of Fort Babine is situated at the north end of Babine Lake and has a population of around 135 individuals. The Lake Babine Band has approximately 1,357 members (1991), many of whom reside outside the TSA, in Burns Lake and elsewhere.

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[19] Gisday Wa and Delgam Uukw. (1989) *The Spirit of the Land* provides a good discussion on the history of Gitxsan and Wet'suwet'en activities in the area. The Gitxsan-Wet'suwet'en Government is one of 33 tribal councils in BC, which deal with administrative, political, and land use issues on behalf of member bands.

3.3.6.2 FIRST NATIONS ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

Unemployment among aboriginal peoples in the Bulkley TSA is significantly higher than it is in other segments of the population, and both the Moricetown Band and the Lake Babine Band are interested in developing employment opportunities in the area. Options examined include commercial fisheries, forestry, and tourism.

The Fort Babine people have worked out an agreement with SCI Smithers to harvest a portion of the company's Forest License apportionment in the Babine Lake area.

3.3.6.3 FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITY VALUES AND CONCERNS

A traditional Nat'oot'en fishery existed at the site of the present fisheries weir on the Babine River. A traditional fishery has also been an important part of the history and culture of the Moricetown community. The Moricetown Canyon on the Bulkley River is ideal for fishing and this was the main reason why Moricetown was located there. For cultural reasons the traditional food fisheries are still important; however, commercial fisheries will potentially play a more important role in maintaining a livelihood for aboriginal people.

Trapping still occurs on territorial land and is an integral part of aboriginal life. It is important from an economic and sustenance perspective. The Fort Babine Nat'oot'en want to ensure that traditional trapping can continue in the future. They want protection of traplines in their territory, as well as protection of berry and herb picking sites. The people of Moricetown express similar views. They are concerned that land use activities such as forestry do not fully consider First Nations cultural values.

The Wet'suwet'en are emphasizing the education of their youth in the traditional language and activities of their people. In 1993, culture camps were held in four different locations in the Smithers-Houston area. Wet'suwet'en youth were instructed in language, history, and culture, including hunting and fishing techniques. Instructors for the camps were Elders associated with the territory in which the camp was located. There are plans to continue these camps in coming years.

In summary, aboriginal people want to be involved in the management of resources in their traditional territories. They want to play an increasing role in the development of employment opportunities, which utilize the TSA's resources in a sustainable manner – including tourism development.

3.4 Bulkley Plan Area – TOS Workshop Results

In early 2001, a workshop was held in Smithers with various tourism stakeholders from the immediate area. To follow is a chart which highlights the comments, concerns and suggestions generated at this session (Exhibit 5).

Exhibit 5: Results from Bulkley TOS Tourism Planning Workshop

OPPORTUNITIES / ADVANTAGES

- Outdoor education opportunity is exceptional with many professional living in the valley
- Opportunity to target english-as-second-language (ESL) student market (i.e.: Nelson)
- Should develop scheduled day trips and overnight horseback riding
- Heli-based access to backcountry
- Develop product to target flora, fauna, nature tours – niche markets
- Valley has many quality 'extreme' mountain bike trails
- Potential need for larger type of "lodge" which in turn will provide opportunities for smaller suppliers
- Hut to hut system easily accessible from the valley floor
- Should develop multi-product activity packages (i.e.: riding, hiking, river running, etc.)

CONCERNS / IMPEDIMENTS

- Transportation linkages are poor (train, air, bus)
- Air travel is cost-prohibitive ($500 - $800)
- All small operators (for the most part) – difficult to develop and/or sustain an awareness in the market place
- There is no larger scale destination resort with which of package with
- Should emphasize the cultural and historical products a lot more than at present
- Tendency for local First Nations to hold cultural inventory information close to their chests – perhaps rightfully so, as there is a perceived risk in letting information out for 'others' to potentially act on
- Concern expressed regarding 'outside' investment/development having potential to "overrun" certain operators
    - counter point: → *"…what is the difference between 'outside' investment in logging or mining? If we had our choice, would we not prefer tourism investment over resource extraction?"*
- The experience to-date with BCAL backcountry tenures is not encouraging – some operations appear to have exclusive access to large operating areas
- The backcountry tourism landscape is diminishing rapidly and MoF should take a lead role in addressing this issue – tourism agencies have never had land-use teeth

3.5 Statistics — Visitors to Northwestern BC

The development of, and access to, up-to-date and pertinent visitor research is fundamental to the successful design, development and operation of a tourism service or product. The importance of visitor research as been well stated by Tourism British Columbia[20]:

> *The future success of BC's tourism industry requires detailed market information on visitors (both resident and non-resident) who travel within the Province. This information will enable the industry to better understand who these visitors are, the type of trips they take, their travel motivations and trip satisfaction, as well as trip planning processes. This in turn will help the industry to better market its products, and to meet the needs of the travelling public.*[21]

Unfortunately, data sources do not exist which comprehensively account for visitors to Northwestern BC. Presently there are three main sources of visitor data: community-based Visitor InfoCentres; provincially-based visitor surveys which occur from time to time (the last BC visitor survey was completed for the 1995/96 visitor season); and a ten year old regional rubber-tire visitor survey undertaken by the North By Northwest Tourism Association of BC (1991).

While regional Visitor InfoCentres diligently record statistics of visitors availing themselves of their services – more often than not the statistics generated within the centres are very general in nature and only account for those visitors actually contacting the InfoCentre directly (walking in and/or contacting for information). They do not and can not provide a comprehensive picture of the myriad of visitors entering the region each tourism season.

Over the past number of years, provincial visitor survey initiatives have less than effectively surveyed visitors to this area of the province. The main item of concern is the lack of visitor survey / contact points addressing the Highway #37 "North To Alaska" highway corridor. Survey contact points have been facilitated along the Highway #16 corridor (usually Prince George & Prince Rupert) but visitors entering or exiting the region via the Highway #37 corridor are mostly missed during these provincial visitor surveys. In recognition that a vast number of visitors to the study area utilize this corridor, regional data summations are weak in this respect.

Nevertheless, the 1995/96 Provincial Visitor Study remains the only real source of regional visitor statistics for the study area[22]. To follow is a brief review of the results for Northwestern BC (NWBC) as generated in this study. It is wise to regard the following as "indicators" only and not definitive visitor statistics.

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[20] British Columbia Visitor Study: Report on Travel in British Columbia — Destination Report: The Report on Visitors to Northern British Colombia Tourism Region: Northwest. Tourism BC, 1998.

[21] Ibid. No.: 20, page 3.

[22] With some historical data found in the: 1991 North By Northwest Regional Visitor Survey, North By Northwest Tourism Association, 1991

3.5.1 Visitor Volume and Value

It has been estimated that about 2.2 million visitors travelled to NWBC for a day or overnight trip, 73% of who are residents of BC. The total NWBC share of provincial visitation is about 7%.

Visitors to NWBC spend about $425 million per season with non-residents accounting for 33% of this spending and BC residents providing 67% of regional revenues. Both non-resident and resident visitors spend on average $54 per day during their stay. However, non-residents spend about $234 per stay in the region as compared to resident spending of about $178 per stay. The total NWBC share of provincial tourism revenues is about 5%.

Non-resident visitors spend an average of 4.4 days in the region and resident visitors stay in the region about 3.4 days per visit.

3.5.2 Visitor Origin

"Other" Canadians accounted for the greatest proportion (38%) of non-resident visitors to NWBC. Close-in regional US and Long Haul US visitors made up a further 23% and 17% respectively of travellers to the region. Overseas visitors accounted for about 13% of non-resident guests.

Resident visitors from northern BC accounted for the largest proportion (55%) of travellers to the region. Visitors from southern BC accounted for 34% of resident visitors to NWBC.

3.5.3 Trip Purpose

The main purpose of the visitors to NWBC who were on an overnight trip in BC and visited the region was for leisure purposes (81% non-residents and 86% residents). Other Canadians and US visitors were the most likely markets (21%) to have traveled for business purposes.

Nearly one-half of non-resident regional leisure travellers journeyed to BC to visit friends or relatives (44%). Long Haul/Overseas leisure travellers cited general sightseeing (39%) as their main reason for travel, followed closely by visiting friends and relatives (30%). Outdoor/wilderness activities were given as the main reason for travel by 20% of regional visitors (other Canada & close-in US) and 16% of Long-Haul/Overseas visitors.

Nearly one-half of resident leisure visitors (47%) traveled in BC to visit friends or relatives (VFR). About 17% cited outdoor activities as their main reason for travel.

3.5.4 Visitor Demographics

Non-residents averaged 44 years of age. Those from Long Haul/Overseas markets tended to be older with 38% aged 55 years and older. Nearly one-half of close-in 'other' Canadians and US visitors (47%) were between the ages of 35 and 54.

Resident visitors averaged 42 years of age and were more likely to be between 18 and 34 years of age than their non-resident counterparts (35% versus 30% respectively).

3.5.5 Seasonal Variations

As expected, the summer season is by far the busiest tourism season in NWBC with 73% of the non-resident Long Haul/Overseas market visiting during this season. Over half of close-in 'other' Canadians and US visitors (55%) travelled to BC during the summer.

Almost half of the resident market (49%) visited NWBC during the summer season. This market also makes up about 31% of all visitors to NWBC during the winter months.

3.5.6 Overall Visitor Activities

While in Northwestern BC, non-resident visitors showed substantial interest in a number of activities including visiting art galleries/museums/exhibits (25%), city/town sightseeing (16%) and freshwater fishing (15%). Only 8% of non-resident visitors reported visiting friends and relatives while in the region.

Virtually all resident visitors (93%) spent time visiting with friends and relatives during their visit to NWBC. Other activity details are shown in Exhibit 6:

Exhibit 6: Overall Visitor Activities in Northwest BC

ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN THE NORTHWEST REGION	VISITORS TO NORTHWEST BC		
	NON-RESIDENT	BC RESIDENT	
	TOTAL %	TOTAL %	NORTH %
Art galleries/museums/exhibits	25	*	*
Sightseeing in the city/town	16	—	—
Freshwater fishing	15	*	*
Sightseeing in the country	9	—	—
Visiting friends or relatives	8	93	94
Zoos/natural displays/gardens	8	*	*
Hiking/backpacking	7	*	*
Nightlife	4	87	
Resting/relaxing	5	—	—

Data on the activities of BC residents in the region was based on an 'aided' question and therefore is not as extensive as the non-resident resident data. (— denotes "not asked/no answer) (* denotes insufficient sample size to report findings).

3.5.7 Outdoor Activities

During their trip to BC, non-resident visitors partook in a number of outdoor activities with one-half taking part in wildlife viewing/bird watching and 43% visiting National or Provincial parks. Sixteen percent went freshwater or saltwater fishing. In addition, many non-resident tourists visited attractions such as historic sites (43%), art galleries/museums (28%) as well as First Nations cultural sites (26%).

BC residents travelling in BC also partake in outdoor activities with 41% participating in sightseeing and 33% participating in wildlife viewing/bird watching. About 24% partook in hiking/backpacking and nearly one-third (31%) visiting attractions such as historic sites. Results are shown in Exhibit 7.

Exhibit 7: Outdoor Activities Undertaken in Northwest BC

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN	OVERNIGHT VISITORS		
	NON-RESIDENT	BC RESIDENT	
	TOTAL %	TOTAL %	NORTH %
(Net) Land-based activities	59	47	40
Visiting National/Provincial Park	43	19	17
Wildlife viewing/bird watching	50	33	30
Hiking/Backpacking	14	24	19
(Net) Winter Activities	1	3	6
Downhill skiing/snowboarding	1	3	5
(Net) Fishing**	16	19	17
Saltwater fishing	5	—	—
Freshwater fishing	15	—	—
(Net) Boating (BC Residents)	—	14	13
Photography	46	38	27
Sightseeing	—	41	34
Golfing	3	12	12

** Note: Among non-resident visitors, this includes both fresh and saltwater fishing. For BC resident visitors this represents all fishing and it is not possible to break this out on a freshwater and saltwater basis (— denotes 'not asked/no answer')

3.5.8 Visitor Spending Profile

The single largest proportion of expenditures by non-resident visitors went towards package tours purchased in BC (28%). Long Haul/Overseas visitors, 35% of whom purchased packages, drove this predominantly. These visitors spent comparatively less on food and beverage expenses (14%) and accommodations (11%) – most likely because these items were included in the package tours they purchased.

Food, beverages and accommodation represent nearly one-half of the total tourism monies spent in BC (46%) by close-in 'other' Canadians and US visitors. A substantial proportion of expenditures for this market also went towards transportation (18%) and package tours purchased in BC (16%).

Food, beverages and accommodation represent one-half of the total monies spent in the Northwest region by resident visitors. These visitors spent an additional 15% on accommodations while travelling in the region (Exhibit 8).

Exhibit 8: Visitor Spending Profile in Northwest BC

% DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL EXPENDITURES	OVERNIGHT VISITORS				
	NON-RESIDENT			BC RESIDENT	
	NON-RESIDENT TOTAL %	REGIONAL CAN & US %	LONG HAUL & OVERSEAS %	TOTAL %	NORTH %
Food & beverage	19	27	14	30	27
Accommodations	14	19	11	18	15
Transportation	16	18	14	21	23
Souvenirs & gifts	6	7	5	7	7
Package tours purchased in BC	28	16	35	*	*
Outdoor activities	3	3	3	6	7
Attractions & cultural events	1	1	—	5	4
Other expenses	15	9	17	12	16

Non-resident expenditures represent all expenditures while in the province. BC resident expenditures represent only expenditures in the region. (— denotes less than 1%) (* denotes package expenses for BC resident visitors were considered pre-trip expenditures and were not included in the visitors' expenditures while travelling in BC).

SOFT
SHOULDER

Chapter 4

4 Wet'suwet'en First Nation

4.1 Introduction

The Bulkley Plan Area provides a unique mix of eco-tourism development opportunities for all communities. Among the municipalities and surrounding communities, thrives a rich and vibrant culture of the Gitksan, Wet'suwet'en, and Natoo'ten nations. These Aboriginal communities have their largest villages located within the Bulkley Plan Area.

The First Nations population demographics are very different from mainstream Canada. Between the three nations, approximating 7,000 people, a young and growing, well educated population, approximately 60% under the age of 30, will be leading the next generation of Aboriginal people into the global economy. The opportunities for change in social and economic conditions did not occur, however, without a significant change in thinking by governments and industry, towards the Aboriginal people.

In the past century, while the main economy developed and expanded, thriving Aboriginal firms shrunk or became almost non-existent in today's business community. One of the contributing factors includes restrictions created through legislations like the Indian Act. This is merely one example of colonial efforts that strangled Aboriginal owned businesses across all sectors. Aboriginal tourism, like all other industry sectors, is also underdeveloped with few products owned by Aboriginal people. Unfortunately, Aboriginal tourism is usually associated with the viewing of customs, artifacts, and lifestyles of Indigenous people, often occurring in museums and promotional literature of non-indigenous businesses with very little benefits to native communities.

The social and economic potential of Aboriginal people was eventually realized after governments response with a broad spectrum of programs geared to revitalize the social and economic fabric of Aboriginal communities. Locally, governments and industries are beginning to work together to redefine and develop diverse sustainable economies that is all inclusive and reflects the local communities. Moreover, the appropriation and marketing of Aboriginal icons is gradually changing as the core business of the marketing firm permeate First Nations values by means of joint ventures, partnerships, and even sole proprietorships of tourism products.

There are several examples throughout British Columbia that serve as a model for a comprehensive Aboriginal tourism product. These products accurately reflect social and economic conditions of local economies and provide a means to enhance local community, municipal, and regional tourism strategies.

The core competencies of these products range from products and services that compete in local economies through to Aboriginal cultural experiences and icons that provide businesses with an opportunity to create community and regional strategies with differential advantage in global markets. Examples of product lines range from five star hotels, casinos and golf courses in the Kootney's, The heritage park's of 'Ksan, Secwepemc and Cowichan First Nations, Olympic metal winning haute-cuisine of the Wet'suwet'en, Retail and mall center of the Campbell River band and the Nuu-cha-nulth community partnership strategy with Tofino.

Tourism development is now on the threshold. Aboriginal tourism is emerging as an important sector to the local economy. Further, tourism is proven as becoming increasingly important as an empowering social and economic platform that provides the local economy with benefits through niche marketing.

While the Bulkley Plan Area continues to undergo significant urban and industrial development, it is apparent that very little Aboriginal representation exists, at least to the extent of competing for tourism revenue with other regions throughout the province. The tourism plant in the Bulkley district is well developed. However, niche products for each house territory can be developed to complement existing businesses, and capitalize on new eco-tourism ventures.

There are several elements of Aboriginal culture that complement the tourism sector. Tourism provides opportunities to develop traditional territories, revitalize cultural and heritage values, build partnerships with surrounding communities, and diversify the local economy. This opportunity study identifies key areas of house territories that can be developed and packaged. Moricetown canyon for example, can potentially serve markets as a destination, stop-over, a staging area and a gateway to Khelh Tats'ilih Bin, K'az Kwa, Cas Nghen, and all points north-east to Babine Lakes. These area are rich and vibrant with not only cultural and heritage sites, but also highly suitable for the development of products outlined in this study.

Like Llut'akhgi't, C'inith kit serves as a gateway to Cel Winits, Cosl'et bin, Nelgi'tat, and De'ilkwah – areas rich in village sites, heritage trails, and cultural activities that are centuries old. In addition, these areas can potentially serve as staging areas to support activities outlined in this TOS. While mature products exist in the 'urban' area, complementary products can be created and serve markets that desire both back country activities and soft tourism activities. Examples of products and services for the urban setting include wholesale and retail merchandise, tourism services, transportation, food & beverage, and cultural attractions showcasing the rich and vibrant culture of the region. Overall, an opportunity exists to develop products and services that provide a healthy competitive environment for both local, imported markets.

4.2 Methodology

The first 15 pages of this section is a compendium of both primary and secondary research. Using academic and technical literature, this section provides a brief, focused description of the social and economic conditions of Aboriginal people in Canada. Gaining an understanding of the historical implications provides the reader with greater understanding of the needs, desires and goals to advance both social and economic conditions of Aboriginal people and Canada through tourism development.

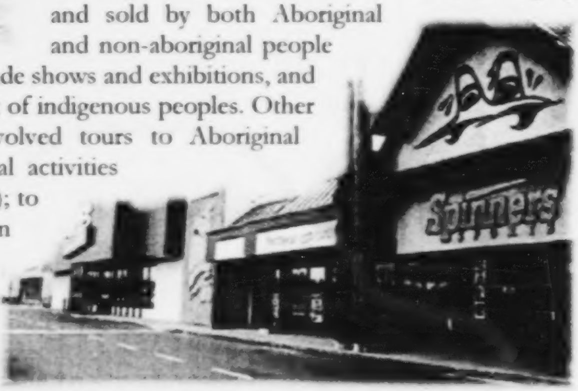
Sources include academic papers, texts, technical reviews, individual interviews, court proceeding documents, and digital technology. Sources of information had been gathered from the province of British Columbia's mapping system; legal proceedings of the Delgamuukw court case; individual interviews with Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs; clan membership; bands; band members; and cumulative research and knowledge management programs of The Office of the Wet'suwet'en.

Using digital technology, base maps, cultural and heritage information, forest development plans and overlays, a preliminary assessment of cultural/heritage and eco-tourism opportunities had been identified. The findings have been reported in the following sections.

4.3 Aboriginal Tourism

Aboriginal tourism is frequently associated with visiting unique and often less developed destinations, where opportunities to experience the customs, artifacts, and lifestyles where Aboriginal people exist. It is not difficult to find promotional tourism literature that focuses on the unique attributes of native or other indigenous peoples in exotic destinations around the globe. This is particularly the case in North America, where Aboriginal people and their cultures have long been used to promote travel. In recent years, however, momentum for the creation of distinct Aboriginal tourism products and enterprises in Canada has grown dramatically. This is illustrated by several strategic initiatives including: The formation of the Canadian National Aboriginal Tourism Association in 1992 and the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia in 1996. Many provinces are strategically incorporating Aboriginal culture into their tourism development and market strategies, while others are creating cultural tourism education programs.

From a more commercial perspective, there has been a virtual explosion in the production of native cultural forms created for and marketed to tourists. Frequently, these native products are marketed in museum and /or cultural centres, powwows, and various other native sites. However, many other native products continue to be created, displayed and sold by both Aboriginal and non-aboriginal people in commercially focused artisan centers, trade shows and exhibitions, and retail outlets –not always to the betterment of indigenous peoples. Other more adventuresome products have involved tours to Aboriginal destinations to observe traditional cultural activities (e.g. carving, games, festivals, construction); to visit archaeological sites of pre-modern native cultures (e.g. villages; fishing stations); or to acquire artifacts (e.g. native art and craft productions).[23]



Numerous examples of best practices in tourism and community development can be found throughout the province of British Columbia. Quu'as West Coast Trail Society presents a comprehensive package, led by the Nuu-cha-Nulth First Nation, with several local tourism operators, to combine a unique First Nations Product. The Secwepemc Education Society operates a museum and a cultural and heritage park, a major special event – the Kamloops Pow-wow, and participates in marketing the High Country Tourism region with Aboriginal tourism products. Quaout Lodge, a three star hotel is among their regional Aboriginal product. The city of Campbell River boasts their contribution of a strip mall that houses major retail chains, and specialty shops, owned and operated by the Kwaguitl Band. In North Vancouver and Grouse Mountain, Hiwuss Feast House presents the visitor with an experience in Westcoast native cuisine, song and dance in venue designed using traditional westcoast architecture. In the Kootney's a range of accommodations from camping and RV parks to a five star hotel and golf course showcase the pride of their local Aboriginal culture. In neighboring communities of the Hazeltons, Ksan provides the model for cultural centers in western Canada.

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[23] Shaping Aboriginal Tourism Product Response to the International Marketplace Prepared by Peter W. Williams and Greg George, August 2000

The local First Nations are working to build on the existing Aboriginal tourism products by enhancing existing infrastructures in their traditional territories. Historically, the Wet'suwet'en have a natural fit in the tourism sector. The Potlatch is a fine example that engages all tourism sectors – a special event, meetings & conferences, food & beverage, accommodation, travel trade, culture, and hospitality etc. As guides, the Wet'suwet'en introduced the newcomer and the missionaries to a vast territory rich and abundant with lands and resources. Since than, as the area became developed, First Nations continued to work in building the Canadian economy in several sectors that encompass transportation, forestry, mining and ultimately building the local tourism infrastructure. Regardless, the infrastructure capital investment, community impression and urban expression fall-short to accurately represent First Nations communities.

In recent years, tourism development had become increasingly important to the Aboriginal people. Tourism is known to virtually touch all aspects of the economy with access to both local and imported markets. Aboriginal tourism, through access to latent markets[24], can further provide benefits the local economy accounting for 8.3 million Aboriginal culture travelers over the next five years[25] thus providing both social and economic development opportunities for both Aboriginal and non-aboriginal communities. Further, the northwest is presented with an opportunity to create a unique, regional tourism product that provides a value added sector, builds partnerships, community development, and a sustainable, diverse local economy[26].

4.3.1 Economic Development and Tourism

By 1999, several economic, training and development programs had been initiated through the Wet'suwet'en Forestry Department. Throughout the consultation processes, the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs have expressed a great deal of interest in seeking opportunities in one of Canada's fastest growing industries – Aboriginal Tourism[27].

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[24] Aboriginal Tourism Markets: Analysis of Germany, Japan and Canada 1999, by Dr. Peter Williams and Karim B. Dossa

[25] Demand for Aboriginal Culture Products in Key European Markets 2000, p. 55 Price Waterhouse Coopers

[26] Wet'suwet'en Tourism Strategy, 1999, Yin'Tah Marketing & Consulting

[27] Discussion in section **Error! Reference source not found.** is cited from: Wet'suwet'en Tourism Strategy, Yin'Tah Marketing & Consulting on behalf of the Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Smithers BC, November 1999.

In July 1999, the Office of the Wet'suwet'en contracted Yin'Tah Marketing & Consulting[28] to conduct an inventory of Wet'suwet'en tourism potential and to review the actions required to establish a Wet'suwet'en Tourism Strategy.

After substantial consultation with Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs and clan members, three (3) significant opportunities had been defined in order to implement a 'tourism strategy'. The projects have been engineered to capture the essence of all Wet'suwet'en interests, and to capitalize on all eight sectors of tourism[29]. Three selected projects – ***Wet'suwet'en Tourism Services, Trails*** and ***Morice River Rafting*** – have been selected to ensure that tourism development utilizes all Wet'suwet'en resources and will act as models for further tourism development. To follow is a brief discussion of these three selected tourism initiatives (Exhibit 9).

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[28] *Yin'Tah Marketing & Consulting*, Site 26, Comp. 1, RR#1, Burns Lake, BC V0J 1E0

[29] As defined by the *Pacific Rim Institute of Tourism* as: accommodation, food & beverage, transportation, events and conferences, tourism services, attractions, travel trade and adventure tourism & recreation (*unfortunately, PRIT is no longer in service)

Exhibit 9: Wet'suwet'en Tourism Strategy – Product Development Initiatives

PROJECT COMPONENT	OVERVIEW
Wet'suwet'en Tourism Services (WTS)	• The WTS will be organized as a destination marketing organization or tourism bureau • The WTS will support industry {tourism} development and will provide the infrastructure necessary to address the concerns of the Wet'suwet'en • The WTS will be employed with a mandate to: o Address cultural and territorial protection with Government and industry; o Ensure authentic product development; o Support Wet'suwet'en community economic development; and o Maintain cultural preservation and enhancement through research and development
Trails	• The Wet'suwet'en territories are linked intricately by a vast network of historical trails • The trails project will provide an infrastructure for development in all sectors of the tourism industry • Two delivery methods are envisioned: o A detailed information booklet about indigenous culture, ecosystems, botanical, medicinal and geographic features o Through a series of experiences organized by the Wet'suwet'en • The 'trails experience' envisioned includes: o A welcoming ceremony & feast o While on trail, visitors will learn about Wet'suwet'en culture from a knowledgeable Hereditary Chief o A variety of options will be provided. From "prepared comfort" to a rudimentary, survival-type experience where visitors learn how to live off the land in an indigenous manner and under the auspices of an experienced Wet'suwet'en outdoor-person • Two trails are presently under construction: o The Maxan Trail (located in the Lakes Forest District), and o The Cronin Trail located north of Moricetown • There are concerns regarding the potential for recreation and tourist use of trails conflicting with traditional use
Morice River Rafting	• This rafting product will start at Morice Lake (Morice Forest District) and will journey for 12 days through Wet'suwet'en and Gitxsan territories • Product is targeted to integrate with Anthropology 112 (through Northwest Community College {NWCC}) and will allow the visitors/clients to experience Wet'suwet'en culture, heritage sites, etc. • Resource instructors from NWCC will teach the curriculum of Anthropology while Wet'suwet'en will provide the value-added experience & knowledge • Day trips along historical trails will provide extra activities

In addition to the initiatives of the Office of the Wet'suwet'en, the ***Moricetown Band*** has a conceptual plan for developing the Moricetown Canyon area for tourism. This plan includes tourism accommodation, a gift shop and interpretive center, interpretive trails and interpretive guides.

4.3.2 First Nations People – A Common World View

To proceed in building this exciting product, an overview of First Nations is necessary to encapsulate the social and economic development opportunities for the surrounding communities.

Expansion, market development, and the introduction of new product entries could not be possible, however, without a fundamental paradigm shift in old ways of conducting business with Aboriginal people. This is an apt phrase insofar as it points to possibilities – not yet seized – of doing things differently and successfully[30].

In British Columbia, the population of Aboriginal people is less than 150,000 people. The unemployment rate is 21%, 12 percentage points greater than the provincial average. 64,000 are registered with the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. 28, 000 live on reserve, while 36, 000 live off-reserve. Reserve lands are held by Her Majesty for the use and benefit of the respective bands for which they were set apart[31]. The organization of reservations vary from remote communities like Takla Landing through to neighborhood communities in the outskirts of metropolitan cities like Squamish, Tsawassen and Musqueam reserve in Vancouver. In this spectrum, some reserves have a range of fine infrastructure with condominiums, like Tsawassen, while others have unbearable living conditions without adequate plumbing and heating. The reserve lands are often small tracts of land sporadically located throughout the province.

Other social indicators like a high mortality rates, health problems, and economic circumstances, perpetuate the beliefs that Aboriginal people remain at the lower side of the social strata. This portrayal of Aboriginal circumstances is a mirror reflection resulting from public policy[32] created as early as the Royal Proclamation 1763. Throughout the history of Canada's developing economy it had become evident that Aboriginal people gained very little wealth as a result of the values of this era.

Until the latter part of the 20th century, Governments and industry became cognizant of the lasting effects of the vision of 'the fathers of confederation'. The change in Canadian values did not come without the relentless pursuit by Aboriginal people, during the past three centuries, and more assertively in the past century, to address their issues, concerns and interests in the developing economy. As a result, key hallmarks like: *The Government's assimilation strategy, The 1969 White Paper Policy, The 1971 Calder Case, 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms, The 1985 Canadian Constitutional amendments, The 1996 Report on the Royal Commission of Aboriginal People, Delgamuukw/Gisdaywa v. Her Majesty the Queen* and the recent *Federal Government Strategy*: Gathering Strength[33] reflects the changes in values toward Aboriginal people.

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[30] When there's a Way, there's a Will By Michael M'Gonigle, Brian Egan Lisa Ambus, July 2001, p21

[31] Indian Act, Section 18 (1)

[32] Public Policy in Canada, 1998, p. 185, Stephen Brooks

[33] For greater insight into this program visit: http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca

Overall, powerful macroeconomic forces are at work here, and these forces may grow even stronger over the next few decades.... major change efforts have helped some organizations adapt significantly to [these] shifting conditions, have improved the competitive standing of others, and have positioned a few for a far better future. But in too many situations the improvements have been disappointing....[34] Canada has the potential to do much better than what it is doing at present, but this will take an enormous commitment, a willingness by all groups in society to accept major changes and to make important compromises.[35]

4.3.3 The Changing Economy—En Route to Globalization

The tacit experience of the masses and their educational experience with Aboriginal people fall short of fully understanding the culture. Throughout the centuries, academics of various faculties, through extensive research, formed many theories about Aboriginal people. The theories, commonly from the non-aboriginal worldview, and not adequately capturing the true worldview of the Aboriginal culture, had been packaged and presented through a supply chain that touches virtually all stakeholders and constituents of the nation. Communicated through many forms – textbooks, film, curriculum, mass media etc. the information empowers education, political, economic, social, legal and religious systems, and in large, the market, with the ability to instil values, beliefs, and perceptions[36] of Aboriginal people.

This stereotype is a tough image to shutter when the perception had been created over generations, and social, legal, and political change is only beginning to occur.

It is evident that Aboriginal people in British Columbia is culturally diverse. Understanding the diversity, recognizing the differences and gaining respect will lead to a successful reconciliation with the new developing economy. "Success requires cross-cultural literacy. This means an understanding of how cultural differences across and within nations can affect the way in which business is practice. Westerners in general, are quick to conclude that because people from other parts of the world also wear blue jeans, listen to western popular music, eat at McDonalds, and drink Coca-Cola, they also accept the basic tenets of Western culture. But this is not true"[37]. The present day Aboriginal population is young and growing. The demographics indicate a generation with higher level of post-secondary education and professional status. Together, along with a strong cultural revitalization, the next generation can make a strong contribution to society.

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[34] Leading Change, John P. Kotter, 1996, page 3

[35] The Next Canadian Century, Building a Competitive Economy, David Crane, 1992, page 268

[36] Critical Skills for communicating in Conflict, Justice Institute of British Columbia

[37] International Business, Charles W.L. Hill 2001, page 78

Aboriginal communities have adapted well to changes in circumstances over the past few centuries. Stakeholders in Aboriginal communities must adapt to macro-conditions as well, since past strategies[38] and a changing global environment presents greater opportunities. To succeed, government and industry must recognize the effects of past decisions and seek understanding to overcome the continued business and ethical dilemma[39] should they choose not to include Aboriginal people in the development of their traditional territories.

4.4 First Nations and the Bulkley Plan Area

4.4.1 Historic Organizations

4.4.1.1 THE INDIAN ACT

In the Bulkley Plan Area area, there are several small reserve lands as represented by Lake Babine, Wet'suwet'en First Nation, Moricetown Band, Hagwilget Band, Burns Lake Band, Cheslatta Band, Nee-tai-buhn, and Skin Tyee Band.

First Nations groups in the area are organized and influenced either through the traditional hereditary system, or through means of the Indian Act.

The Indian Act provides a means for administrating social programs and to service the development and maintenance of community infrastructures. The Indian Act is the jurisdiction of the Federal government's Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Development (DIAND). DIAND initially created large organizations as a means for communication between 'indians' and the Department Indian Affairs. However, over the course of it period, the large organization went from it large controlling interests to the goal of devolution and self-governing communities. Over the course of the Indian act, a political and corporate culture was created.[40]

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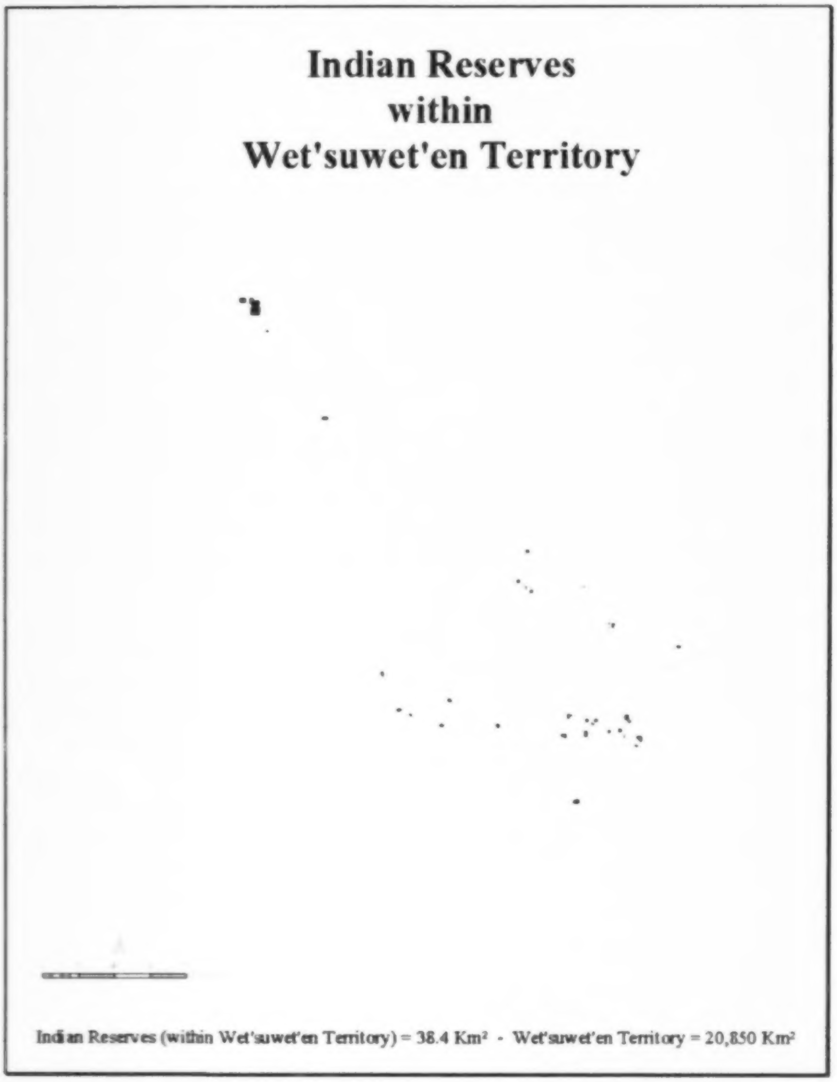
[38] To gain better understanding of deceitful strategies, read: The Prince, Nicocolo Machiavelli, 1972 p.11

[39] Greater understanding on this topic can be attained in: The Ethics of Management, LaRue Tone Hosmar, 1996, p.1.

[40] Aboriginal People and Politics, The Indian Land Question in British Columbia, 1849-1989. UBC Press, 1990, Paul Tennant

Exhibit 10: Indian Reserves within Wet'suwet'en Territory



Indian Reserves
within
Wet'suwet'en Territory

Indian Reserves (within Wet'suwet'en Territory) = 38.4 Km² - Wet'suwet'en Territory = 20,850 Km²

Band communities mainly consist of Aboriginal people registered under the provisions of the Indian Act. However, in 1985, legislation empowered Aboriginal people who had previously lost their right and have since been able to become reinstated into the Indian act. Therefore, the band membership has a population that extends beyond the reserve boundaries.

The organizational structure is functional with powers of authority mainly resting with chief and council. Each band has an elected council and a chief. Under the direction of the band membership the chief and council are elected to represent the interests of the band. The Indian Act mainly drives the policies.

4.4.2 The Traditional System

Since the Bulkley Plan Area transcends into the Lake Babine Nation traditional territory, The Gitksan Territory and the Wet'suwet'en traditional territory, this section will primarily focus on traditional hereditary system of the Wet'suwet'en for several reasons. It should be understood, that while the Babine and Gitksan people are a nation of their own, however, both systems have acculturated traits and are similar in nature. The Main differences exist in linguistic dialect and the clan structure: The Wet'suwet'en have five clans; where as the Babine have four clans: Likhc'ibu (bear), Jilhtsehyu (frog), Gilantin (caribou), and Likhtsemisyu (beaver)[41]. Greater detail on the traditional system is discussed in the following sections.

Smithers
Houston
Burns Lake

Furthermore, the Wet'suwet'en traditional house territories encompass approximately 80% of the Bulkley Plan Area and extend beyond the two neighboring forest districts.

4.4.2.1 THE TRADITIONAL HOUSE TERRITORY

The Wet'suwet'en house territories are located in North-Central British Columbia. The area is approximately 22,000 square km. Boundaries extend from Endako River in the East at Mosquito flats near Hagwilget in the West and the vicinity south of Babine Lake in the North to the Coast mountain ranges in the south beyond Morice Lake and Ootsa Lake. The Wet'suwet'en "live in a territory which is favorable for human settlement. The territory is a sufficient land base to support extensive organized activity. In this territory, the people have access to the diverse resources of three different ecological zones. Resources surplus to the immediate needs of the people are harvested....as evidenced by the trade and commerce carried on before European contact and thereafter....[42]

Within the confines of the Wet'suwet'en territory are many geographical features that are attractive to the Eco-tourist. Lake systems are a natural attraction with thousands of miles of water-frontage. The territory is home of the Nechako and Fraser plateau and has the headwaters of the Skeena and Fraser River systems. The majestic Coast Mountains and the Babine Mountain Ranges, and Telkwa Ranges tower over pristine wilderness and unique wildlife habitat.

The land is integral to Wet'suwet'en culture. It provides the basis for cultural activities, hunting and gathering, historical values and spiritual means. Wet'suwet'en territorial boundaries, in the Wet'suwet'en language, are often landmarks that describe the geographic attributes, ecosystem profile, and/or cultural/traditional significance. The Wet'suwet'en territory is divided for clan stewardship. Clan members respect their territorial boundaries and all activities and cultural practices that occur within their traditional territories. The territories and management of resources are based on respect and knowledge of the land.

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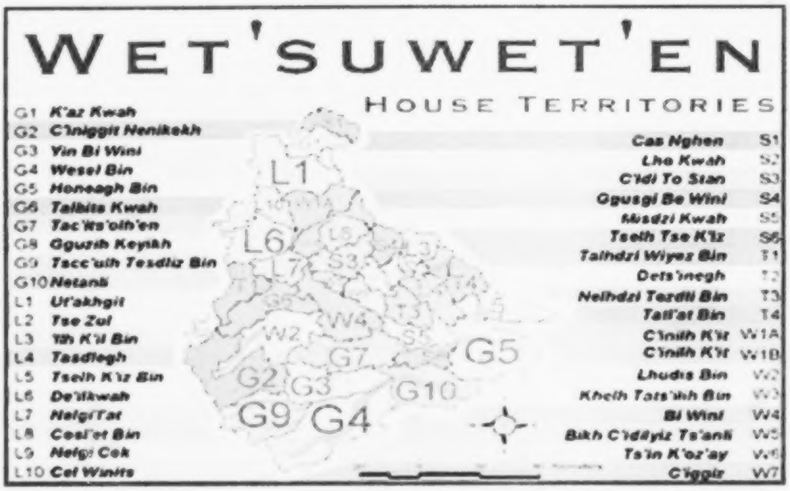
[41] Cis Dideen Kat, When the Plumes Rise, Jo-Anne Fiske and Betty Patrick, 2000 p.48

[42] Statement of Facts, Appellants Factum, Court of Appeal transcripts, Delgamuukw v Her Majesty the Queen and the Attorney General of Canada. March 8, 1991. Page 6


WET'SUWET'EN
HOUSE TERRITORIES
G1 K'az Kwah
G2 C'iniggit Nenikekh
G3 Yin Bi Wini
G4 Wesel Bin
G5 Honeagh Bin
G6 Talbits Kwah
G7 Tac'its'oih'en
G8 Gguzih Keyikh
G9 Tsec'uih Tesdliz Bin
G10 Netanli
L1 Ut'akhgit
L2 Tse Zul
L3 Tih K'il Bin
L4 Tasdlegh
L5 Tselh K'iz Bin
L6 De'ilkwah
L7 NelgiTat
L8 Cesl'et Bin
L9 Nelgi Cek
L10 Cel Winits
Cas Nghen S1
Lho Kwah S2
C'idi To Stan S3
Ggusgi Be Wini S4
Misdzi Kwah S5
Tselh Tse K'iz S6
Talhdzi Wiyez Bin T1
Dets'inegh T2
Neihdzi Tezdli Bin T3
Tali'at Bin T4
C'inilh K'it W1A
C'inilh K'it W1B
Lhudis Bin W2
Khelh Tats'ilh Bin W3
Bi Wini W4
Bikh C'iddiyiz Ts'anli W5
Ts'in K'oz'ay W6
C'iggiz W7
L1
L6
L7
L5
S3
W4
W2
S5
G7
G5
G2
G3
G10
G9
G4

For well over 5000 years[43], the Wet'suwet'en people have used, and continue to use, these traditional use areas for a wide range of purposes. The Wet'suwet'en have lived and use the territories for sustenance and to support the Wet'suwet'en social and economic activities through examples of gathering activities for food such as berries, tubers, and shoots. Saplings, roots, and bark are used for medicinal purposes and specific flora was used for spiritual means. Hunting and trapping for moose, deer, elk, goat, bear, are Wet'suwet'en staples and other small fur-bearers provide sustenance, clothing and economic means of survival. Fishing for salmon and other game fish such trout, char, lingcod etc, is abundant in the lakes, rivers and tributaries. The wildlife is a natural attraction. The wildlife and territories can be enhanced through the teachings of the Wet'suwet'en worldview thus adding value to an already existing, high demand product.

The territories are veined with an intricate trail system. These trails serve as access to pristine wilderness and infrastructure for recreation. While public access is inevitable, the trails network can be used as interpretive trails and camps to 'educate' tourists on the heritage and cultural relevance of the Wet'suwet'en territories. The trails were used not only to access the territories, but also served as a link to trade centers and served as corridors for destinations such as hunting/fishing camps and the missionaries. The land was a vital to Wet'suwet'en lifestyles. It served as economic, social, political, technological, and spiritual means to survival.[44]

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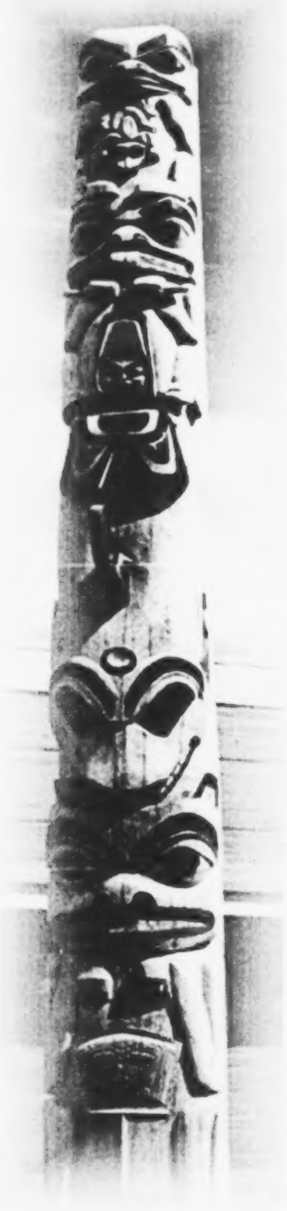
[43] The Spirit in the Land, 1989, p.11, Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs

[44] Wet'suwet'en Tourism Strategy, 1999, Yin'Tah Marketing & Consulting

4.4.2.2 THE HEREDITARY SYSTEM



The Wet'suwet'en people are organized by a matrilineal system. The matrilineal system is based on extended families. These families represent a "yex"; commonly known as 'house'. These houses, as a collective, comprise a 'clan'. In the Wet'suwet'en hereditary system, there are five clans: Gitdumden, Laksamishu, Gilsehyu, Tsayu, and Laksilyu. Within the clan structure, there are thirteen 'houses'. Each 'house' has a house chief—"denizeh", 'wing' chiefs--extended family, future chiefs--skizeh and clan members.

A chief is born into their house and it is decided by the clan chiefs to determine their hereditary status. Chiefs are usually groomed from birth throughout their life to represent the best interest of their clan. Hereditary chiefs are recognized for their knowledge, wisdom, and spiritual abilities. A chief is given a hereditary name. A chief's name is a name of an ancestor who is highly regarded for their contribution to their family, clan, and nation, and has a profound spiritual element. The House Chief represents the interests of their houses, the sub-chiefs and the wing chiefs are assistants to the house chief and serve as spokespeople. There is no one chief bigger than the other – they all work together prior to making a decision. [45]

The house chief is recognized by their presentation of regalia--drums, totem poles, leggings, apron, and headdress. The regalia represent the clan and house group and their spiritual connection to the land and their ancestors known as kungas[46]. The regalia, along with chief names, are transferred from one generation to the next in the bahlahts.

4.4.2.3 THE BAHLAHTS (POTLATCH)

The Bahlahts is a complex institution to describe and is beyond the scope of this chapter. However, a brief introduction to the bahlahts is necessary for readers to understand how the hereditary system functions and the importance and relevance for development purposes.

The traditional system is governed by the Bahlahts, commonly known as the feast, or potlatch. The Bahlahts is an event that formalizes the Yinta. It is a forum where one clan would host a 'feast' and will invite all chiefs of other clans and sometimes from other nations. The role of the guests is to witness all transactions of the event. Transactions will include, for example, the payment of debts, recognition, acknowledgement, spirituality, and traditional rituals. There are 13 different Bahlahts, each with strict protocol. A feast can be as large as 500 people and, traditionally last for days, but recently, can last up to 18 hours.

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[45] Gallaghun, interview: February 17, 2002

[46] The Spirit in the Land, 1989, Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs

It is during the feast where most of the culture is apparent. There is strict protocol, kungax, and a place where transactions become law. It is venue where food and resources gathered from the territory is distributed throughout the duration of the feast.

All guests are acknowledged and paid with money, gifts, and food for witnessing the event. It is a kind gesture where all people are equally respected. The Wet'suwet'en have used their traditional territories, along with the feast system, for well over 5000 years[47]. The system had adapted, but remained consistent through several social, political, economic, cultural, changes and will continue to thrive.

4.5 Legal, Political, & Economic Influences on Development

4.5.1 Legal Requirements

While a legal discussion of Aboriginal title is beyond the scope of tourism development, it is important to keep the legal requirements, along with the moral obligation, whether it's a major business, or a lifestyle business to institute meaningful consultation when planning for development. Approaching planning in this manner will reduce the likelihood of unnecessary conflict, and the increased risks of costs.

This is particularly important resulting from several legal decisions. On December 11, 1997, the Supreme Court of Canada released its legal decision in Delgamuukw/Gisdaywa v. Her Majesty the Queen. The decision marked the first time that the Supreme Court had ruled that the concept of Aboriginal title existed.[48] The evidence provided in this court case can be best summarized as read in sections traditional system of the Wet'suwet'en as discussed in this document. .

Supporting the Delgamuukw court decision, and advancing Aboriginal interests in the decision making processes of lands & resource development are recent court decisions.

In the Court of Appeal between The Council of the Haida Nation and Guujaaw AND The Minister of Forests, The Attorney General of British Columbia, Weyerhaeuser Co. Ltd[49]. And of Equal importance is the legal decision between The Taku River Tlingit First Nation and Redfern Resources Ltd, the Minister of Environment, lands and Parks, the minister of Energy and mines, and The Minister Responsible for Northern Development. In summary these decisions require governments and industries to consult with First Nations prior to developing lands and resources. Consulting with First Nations groups ensure that the culture and traditions are respected as well as ensuring the development of sustainable social and economic benefits for all interests.

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[47] The Spirit in the Land, 1989. Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs

[48] For a detailed compendium visit: www.delgamuukw.org

[49] For a detailed citation visit: http://www.courts.gov.bc.ca

4.5.2 The Canadian Constitution

Throughout the traditional territories, several locations provide evidence of occupation i.e. Wet'suwet'en traditional use. Examples of traditional use and occupation includes burial sites, archaeological sites, culturally modified trees, fishing sites, camp and village sites located throughout their traditional territories. These areas are validated through oral histories of the territory stewards, and kungas. Together, the knowledge of the culture and evidence of the cultural and heritage sites provide a critical link between the cultural protection/revitalization, the land, the history, and most importantly, future generations. The culture is protected under section 25 and 35 of the Canadian Constitution.

4.5.3 Copyright and Intellectual Property

While opportunities for Aboriginal people in tourism development extend across many sectors, a unique niche exists for Aboriginal people in eco-tourism. The previous sections outlined the unique relationship between the land and culture. The common knowledge, oral histories and nature of the culture and its integral attributes to the land requires special attention. To avoid misuse and cultural appropriation, The Office of the Wet'suwet'en is working to "use existing legal tools….and a web of strategies to help Aboriginal communities better protect and control their traditional knowledge"[50]. For further information, contact the Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Land & Resources.

4.5.4 Globalization Factors Worth Considering

4.5.4.1 THE KYOTO ACCORD

While this accord does not affect tourism development directly, however, increased global demand for renewable resources will indirectly affect tourism development through resource-use economics. The traditional territories outlined above have cultural and heritage interests in one of BC's largest watershed. This watershed presents opportunities for those interests in supplying global markets with alternative energy substitutes.

4.5.4.2 THE SOFTWOOD LUMBER AGREEMENT

While approximately 20% of the greatest tourism development potential exists within a non-productive bio-geoclimatic zone, there are numerous regions that have cultural and heritage zones, along with other natural features that present a reasonable opportunity for development in product forestry zones. The potential for resource use conflicts will either increase or decrease depending on global demands for forest products. The softwood lumber agreement will undoubtedly affect tourism development either directly or through economic spin-offs.

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[50] Intellectual Property and Aboriginal People: A Working Paper, Fall 1999, Research and Analysis Directorate, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development

4.5.5 Consultation

Prior to development of lands and resources, it is critical to consult with local First Nations stakeholders. It is a moral and fiduciary responsibility and is supported across all legal, political, social, and economic institutions. There are several interests to consider when planning a consultation process. Over and above the obvious interest groups, consultation must include the areas governing agency, Band members, clan members, and trapline holders.

For further information on protocol, contact the respective agencies of which the traditional territories/ area of interest exist. Contacts may include one or all of: The Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Lake Babine Nation, The Gitksan Treaty Office, and band offices.

4.6 Contemporary Organizations:

4.6.1 Keys to Building Strategic Alliances

While the traditional hereditary system continues to thrive, modern organizations had been created to work with government institutions, and recently, corporate entities. In the Bulkley Plan Area, there are two main organizations whose interests exist in Aboriginal tourism development. The Office of the Wet'suwet'en is a representative for the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs (the hereditary system), and there are Band organizations whose jurisdictions fall within the Indian Act.

4.6.2 Office of Wet'suwet'en

The Office of the Wet'suwet'en (OW) is an organization created in 1977. The mandate is to represent the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs. The core competency of the OW includes research & development and knowledge management for the Wet'suwet'en hereditary chiefs. Success in knowledge management is reflected in the landmark court case Delgamuukw/Gisdaywa vs. Her Majesty the Queen, and several protocol agreements, Memorandum of Understandings, and political accords with Federal and Provincial governments and Industries. The office is charged with creating programs in economic development, treaty negotiation, lands & resource management, social services, Aboriginal justice, and recently, Tourism development.

The following programs are examples of programs that complement tourism development:

4.6.2.1 WET'SUWET'EN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The mandate of the Office of the Wet'suwet'en's Economic Development Department is to research, identify, develop and implement opportunities for sustainable economic development which will benefit all Wet'suwet'en. This can be achieved through improved communications, relations and partnerships with all levels of governments, the private sector, non-government organizations, clans and communities.

At present, Wet'suwet'en are activily engaged with the forest sector through harvesting, forest health and silviculture activities with licencees. Other economic development priorities include the non-timber values of the forest, mining, agriculture, horticulture, wildlife, fisheries, and human resource development.

Tourism initiatives include the development of a comprehensive regional aboriginal tourism product marketing strategy with the neighboring First Nations, a regional tourism marketing strategy in partnership with the municipalities, investigation and implementation of eco-cultural tourism opportunities, the integration of Wet'suwet'en Tourism Services, and the development of Wet'suwet'en tourism infrastructure through marketing targeted at the investment sector.

4.6.3 Lands & Resources

The purpose of the Lands & Resources department is to protect all lands and resources of the Wet'suwet'en territory for the benefit of the Wet'suwet'en, to develop capacity for the economic development of communities and to preserve these resources for generations to come.

4.6.3.1 THE WET'SUWET'EN TERRITORIAL STEWARDSHIP PLAN

The Wet'suwet'en Territorial Stewardship Plan is similar to a Lands and Resources Management Plan. The core competencies of this plan is the value of the Wet'suwet'en and encompasses social, cultural and economic values. This will ensure a balance and sustainable approach to planning social and economic development and will ensure the protection of the Wet'suwet'en culture by employing contemporary planning methods.

4.6.3.2 CULTURAL/HERITAGE POLICY

The Office of the Wet'suwet'en worked with the Province of British Columbia to identify cultural and heritage resources. These definitions have identified the following archaeological standards:

Wet'suwet'en Shelters:	• Large Dwellings: Pit House, Smoke house/Long House sites. • Small Dwellings: Lean-too shelter, Khiyt Bin Yikh (lake house)
Adjoining Traditional Use Areas:	• Baking Pit, cache pits, food caches, sweat lodge, gravesites
Wet'suwet'en Trails:	• Trapping Trails, common trails

4.6.4 Treaty Negotiations

The treaty negotiations team works with all levels of governments and strategic alliances in industry to advance the goals and best interests of the communities in the Wet'suwet'en territories. The following are examples of initiatives that directly, or indirectly, support tourism development.

4.6.4.1 THE POLITICAL ACCORD CONCERNING LANDS & RESOURCES

An agreement made on April 27, 2000 between the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs, The Province of British Columbia, Canada, and Industry. The goals of the agreement involves the identification of economic opportunities, Wet'suwet'en involvement in lands and resources planning and management, exploration of a means for protection of key areas of environmental, cultural, spiritual, historical and other values, capacity building, and partnership building.

4.6.4.2 MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING REGARDING RECOGNITION, RESPECT, AND RECONCILIATION

In 1995, the Province of British Columbia entered into an accord with the Wet'suwet'en recognizing that the Wet'suwet'en have Aboriginal rights and the inherent right to self government….mutual respect for the histories, laws, customs, institutions of the Wet'suwet'en and laws of British Columbia. This agreement focuses on social and economic development programs and services.

4.7 Bands

The following information for the bands has been gathered from the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. Detailed information can be accessed on the Aboriginal Portal Website at: www.aboriginalcanada.gc.ca.

4.7.1 Burns Lake Band

The Burns Lake Band Office is located adjacent to the Village of Burns Lake. The band has a small population, but is quite active in local economic development initiatives. There are no reserved lands in the Bulkley Plan Area. However, the band members are also members of the Wet'suwet'en people and Stella'ten, and therefore, have interests within the Wet'suwet'en traditional territory boundaries. Existing tourism businesses with which band members are involved with include the Rainbow Motel and Gas Bar, boating tours, and snowmobiling tours. The band is involved in extensive planning with the surrounding communities.

4.7.2 Nee Tahi Buhn

Nee Tahi Buhn band is located on the Southside of Francois Lake. There are 5 tracts of land, in the lands registry, allocated for the band membership of Nee tahi buhn. Nee tahi buhn are claiming traditional territories, along with the Wet'suwet'en in the southern portion of Bulkley Plan Area. The following reserve lands have been identified:

- Isaac (gale lake) 8, Francois Lake 7, Omineca 1, Uncha Lake 13a, Eastern Island no. 13

The band membership is interested in tourism development with interests in advancing their interests in both social and economic development.

4.7.3 Wet'suwet'en First Nation (formerly Broman Lake Band)

The Wet'suwet'en First Nation community and head Office is located 20 km. west of the Village of Burns Lake. There are eleven tracts of land allocated for this band. However, the majority of the band membership continues to practice the hereditary system, and therefore, have access to the traditional territories as outlined in the hereditary system section of this chapter. The following reserve lands are under the band Wet'suwet'en First Nation. Statistics and detailed information is not available.

- Klagookchew no. 9, Maxan Creek no. 5, Maxan Lake no. 3, Tsichgass 10, Duncan Lake 2, Maxan lake 4, Palling 1, Tatla West 11, Felix George no. 7, Foxy Creek no. 6, Gaichbin no. 8.

Wet'suwet'en First Nation run a gas bar located on Duncan Lake Reserve. This venture is ideally situated on highway 16 and serves as a gateway to several lakes.

4.7.4 Moricetown Band

While there are no reserve lands within the Bulkley Plan Area, there are band members who participate in the Wet'suwet'en hereditary system and therefore have interests in the development of traditional territories.

4.7.5 Hagwilget Band

While there are no reserve lands within the Bulkley Plan Area, there are band members who participate in the Wet'suwet'en hereditary system and therefore have interests in the development of traditional territories.

4.7.6 Skin Tyee

While there are no reserve lands within the Bulkley Plan Area, there are band members who participate in the Wet'suwet'en hereditary system and therefore have interests in the development of traditional territories.

4.7.7 Lake Babine Nation

The Lake Babine Nation head office is located on Reserve lands adjacent to the Village of Burns Lake. The nation has a significant population located throughout four main villages: Tachet, Fort Babine, Old Fort and Woyenne. In the INAC Land Registry, there are 25 tracts of reserve lands for the Babine Nation (Exhibit 11). A majority of the band membership also participates in the hereditary system and therefore has access to traditional territories.

Exhibit 11: Lake Babine Nation – Land Registry Tracts

No.	Name	Location	Hectares
07485	CLOTALAIRQUOT NO. 4	CASSAIR DISTRICT, ON EAST SHORE OF NILKITKWA LAKE, BABINE RIVER, 3 MILES NORTH OF BABINE	80.1
07486	NO-CUT NO. 5	CASSIAR DISTRICT ON WEST SHORE OF NILKITKWA LAKE, BABINE RIVER 2 MILES NORTH OF BABINE	79.7
07487	BABINE NO. 6	CASSIAR DISTRICT, AT BABINE, NORTH END OF BAINE LAAKE	279.8
07488	ALPHONSE TOMMY NO. 7	CASSIAR DISTRICT ON WEST SHORE OF BABINE LAKE SOUTH OF BABINE I.R. NO. 16	37.2
07489	CASDEDED NO. 8	FORT FRANCIS DISTRICT, ON EAST SHORE OF BABINE LAKE, 2 MILES SOUTH OF BABINE	43.3
07490	TSAK NO. 9	FORT FRASER DISTRICT, ON WEST SHORE OF BABINE LAKE, 12 MILES SOUTH OF BABINE	615.1
07491	NE-TSAW-GREECE NO 10	FORT FRASER DISTRICT ON NORTHERLY SHORE OF BABINE LAKE 18 MILES SOUTHEASTERLY FROM BABINE	91.5
07492	NEDOATS NO. 11	FORT FRASER DISTRICT ON NORTHERLY SHORE OF BABINE LAKE AT OLD FORT	395.4
07493	MICHELL PIERRE NO. 12	FORT FRASER DISTRICT ON SOUTHERLY SHORE OF NORTH ARM OF BABINE LAKE 3 MILES SOUTHWEST OF OLD FORT	136
07494	NEDOATS NO. 13	FORT FRASER DISTRICT LOT 1360, ON NORTHERLY SHORE OF BABINE LAKE WEST OF AND ADJOINING I.R. NO. 11	221
07495	CHANOODANDIDALCH NO. 14	FORT FRASER DIST. LOT 1359, ON NORTHERLY SHORE OF NORTH ARM OF BABINE LAKE EAST OF ADJOINING BABINE LAKE I.R. NO. 2	95.1
07496	TADINLAY NO. 15	FORT FRASER DISTRICT, LOT 1358, ON NORTHERLY SHORE OF NORTH ARM OF BABINE LAKE	187
07497	BABINE NO. 16	CASSIAR DISTRICT, LOT 1357, AT NORTH END OF BABINE LAKE, WEST OF I.R. NO. 6	285.3
07498	BABINE LAKE NO. 20	CASSIAR DIST LOT 1366, ON NRTLY SHORE OF NORTH ARM OF BABINE LAKE, BTW NE-TSAW-GREECE IR 10, & CHANOODANDIDALCH IR 14	259
07499	BABINE RIVER NO. 21	CASSIAR DISTRICT, LOT 1600, ON LEFT BANK OF BABINE RIVER AT NORTH END OF NILKITKWA LAKE	21.4
07500	BABINE RIVER NO. 21A	CASSIAR DISTRICT, LOT 1601 ON RIGHT BANK OF BABINE RIVER, EAST OF I.R. 21	21.9
07501	BABINE LAKE NO. 21B	COAST DISTRICT, RG. 5, LOT 6682, ON SOUTHWESTERLY SHORE OF BABINE LAKE, AT DONALD LANDING	2.3
07502	AUGIER LAKE NO. 22	COAST DISTRICT, LOT 2157, RANGE 5 AT NORTH END OF AUGIER LAKE	8.1

NO.	NAME	LOCATION	HECTARES
07503	PINKUT LAKE NO. 23	COAST DISTRICT, LOT 2178, RANGE 5, AT NORTH END OF PINKUT LAKE	4.6
07504	TAHLO LAKE NO. 24	CASSIAR DISTRICT, LOT 4859, 1 MILE NORTH OF TAHLO LAKE,	129.5
07505	BABINE NO. 25	COAST DISTRICT, LOT 1353, RANGE 5, AT TOPLEY LANDING WEST SHORE OF BABINE LAKE	51.8
07506	BABINE NO. 26	COAST DISTRICT, LOT 2172, RG. 5, ON EAST SHORE OF BABINE LAKE	32.4
07507	WOYENNE NO. 27		12.6
08373	CHAPEL PARK NO. 28	COAST DISTRICT, LOT 1, BLOCK A, DIST, LOT 2502	3.8

Note: The reserve hectarage is currently under review. Please contact the Indian Land Registry at (819) 994-3666 for clarification about a specific reserve.

4.7.7.1 LAKE BABINE TOURISM PRODUCTS

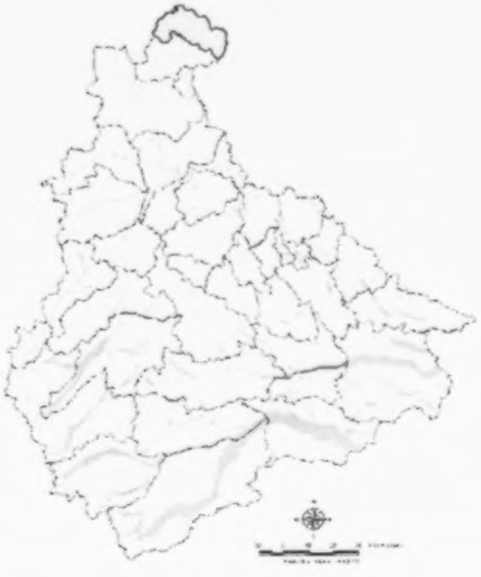
An owner and operator exist with the Fort Babine Lodge located on the west end of Babine Lake. The lodge provides accommodation, rentals, and is currently preparing packages.

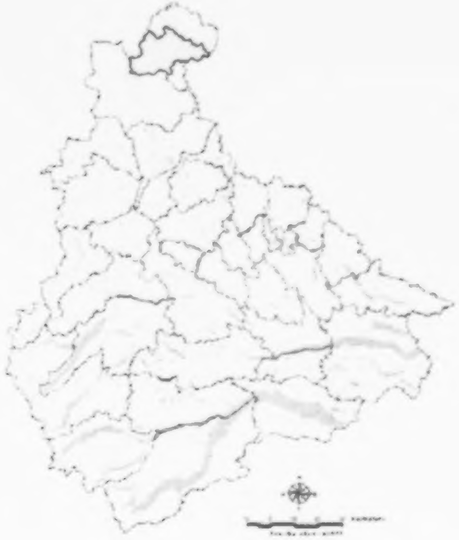
Members of the Lake Babine Nation have interests in developing areas throughout the Babine Lake region. Examples of development include the Grease Trail, and infrastructure that complements these developments. Other areas of interests include the development of reserve lands in the 'Rainbow Alley' region, Fort Babine, and Old Fort area. The membership also identified other areas throughout their traditional territories. Partnerships had been made between governments and industry. For further information, contact the Lake Babine Band Office in Burns Lake.

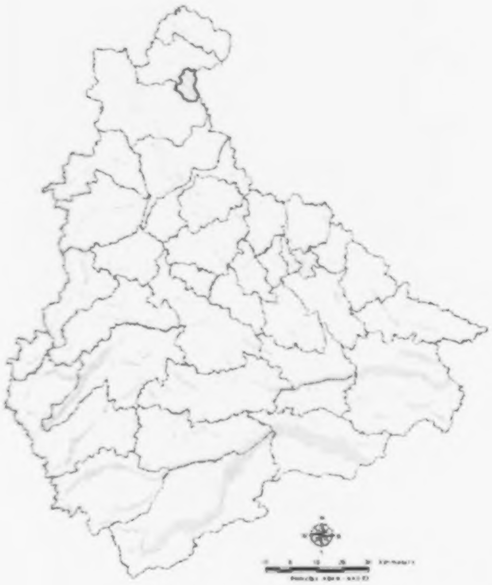
4.7.8 Nat'oot'en First Nation

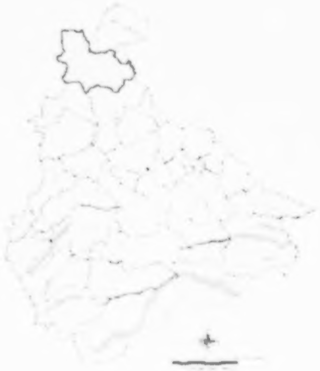
In terms of tourism, the Fort Babine Band recognizes that the wilderness-like quality of the area in which they live has potential for supporting a fishing and hunting lodge. Fort Babine Enterprises Society, a Grouse Clan owned business, has constructed a lodge and eight log cabins on Babine Lake. Four more cabins and serviced RV sites will be built in the future. The company is also interested in developing a "photo hunting" business to complement the lodge and cabin facilities.

Band members have indicated a wide range of interests including use of historic trails, cabins along Babine & Nilkitkwa Lakes, skiing on French Peak, riverboat tours and purchase of a Smithers hotel to serve as a base for their tourism operations.

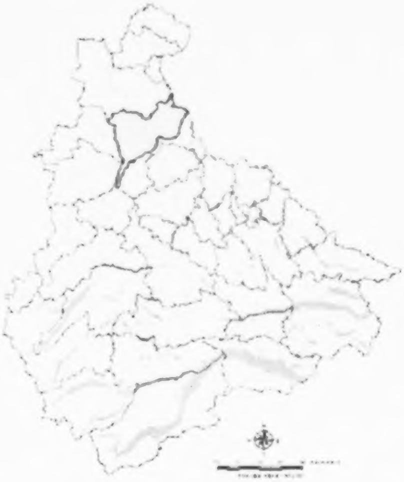
<table>
<tr><td>Map reference: S1</td><td>Clan: Laksamishyu
House name: Cas Nghen</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"></td></tr>
<tr><td>Contact:</td><td>Features</td></tr>
<tr><td>The Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Lands and Resources department for further information: 847-3630</td><td>• Blunt Mountain
• Harold Price Creek
• Netazul Mountain/Creek
• Torkelson Creek
• Camp Lake/Creek</td></tr>
<tr><td>Strengths</td><td>Weaknesses</td></tr>
<tr><td>• Diverse eco-system
• Non-productive industrial forestry
• Mountainous
• Wildlife
• High cultural value</td><td>• Approx. 50% harvested up to camp lake, majority in the last 20 years.
• Remote access</td></tr>
<tr><td>Opportunities</td><td>Threats</td></tr>
<tr><td>• Hut to hut
• Trails system</td><td>• Increased industrial development from the eastern quadrant of the territory</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2"><i>Sample cultural features</i>: Territorial markers, hunting & food gathering sites, heritage trails, heritage campsites, Winter village site, gathering/meeting sites, settlement.</td></tr>
</table>

Map reference: G1	**Clan: Gilsehyu** **House name: K'az Kwah**
	
Contact:	**Features**
The Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Lands and Resources department for further information: 847-3630	• Mt. Seaton • Kwun Creek • Causqua Creek • Howal Creek • Blunt Creek
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
• About 10% disturbance in last 20 years. • Good access: well established road from the eastern quadrant with new developments from the west • Mountainous	• Approximately 40% harvested w/ 15% planned for the next 5 years.
Opportunities	**Threats**
	• Increased industrial development
Sample cultural features: Hunting, fishing & food gathering sites, heritage trails, wildlife, village site (dizkle), trade center, travel hub, gravesites, spiritual sites, legends	

Map reference: W3	**Clan: Gitdumden** **House name: Khelh Tats'ilih Bin**
	
Contact:	**Features**
The Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Lands and Resources department for further information: 847-3630	• Babine Mountain • Keulsh Creek • Wan Lake • Blunt Creek
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
• Non productive forests • Trails • High cultural values • Mountainous terrain • High wildlife values	• Distance from urban access
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Trail through center of territory	• Industrial development from the Northern quadrant
Sample of cultural features: heritage trails, fishing sites, hunting & gathering areas, grave sites	

Map reference: L1	**Clan: Laksilyu** **House name: Ut'akhgit**
	
Contact:	**Features**
The Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Lands and Resources department for further information: 847-3630	• Babine Mountains • Mt. Hyland • Driftwood Creek • Toboggan Creek/Glacier • Silvern Lake • Kitseguekla Lake • The Nipples • Rocky Ridge • Brian Boris Pk. • Strawberry Flats • Moricetown Canyon
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
• Diverse ecosystem • Mountainous • Highway 16 • Bulkley Ranges • Roche du boule Ranges • Moricetown Canyon • Trail head	• Urban populated • Productive forests
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Staging area strategy • Moricetown canyon development	• Increased resource use conflicts • Urban, industrial forestry, and agricultural use developments
Sample of cultural features: village sites, fishing sites, hunting & gathering areas, legends, heritage campsite, settlements, gravesites	

Map reference: W1-A	**Clan: Gitdumden** **House name: C'inilh'k'it**



Contact

Contact The Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Lands and Resources department for further information: 847-3630

Features

- Mt. Hyland
- Little Joe Creek
- Mckendrick Creek
- McDowell Lake
- Tyee Lake
- Telkwa River
- Four Creek
- Cabinet Creek
- Tenas Creek
- Four Creek
- Seymour Lake
- Pine Creek
- Ski Smithers
- Glacier Gulch
- Village of Telkwa
- Bulkley River

Strengths

- Smithers Amenities
- Reserve Lands in the Town of Smithers

Weaknesses

- Heavily populated
- Heavy industrial activity

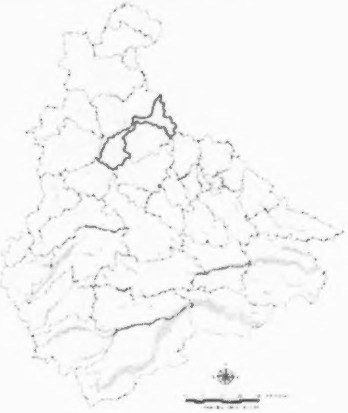
Opportunities

- Development of regions on the north east quaderant of the territory
- Staging area for Babine mountains
- Soft tourism: heritage tours

Threats

- Increased development in the northeast quadrant of the territory

Sample of cultural features: Fishing sites, legends, heritage trails, hunting & gathering areas, territorial markers, village settlements, Winter village site, heritage food preparation sites, gravesites

Map reference: W1-B	**Clan: Gitdumden** **House name: C'inilh K'it**
	
Contact	**Features**
The Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Lands and Resources department for further information: 847-3630	• Mt. Mckendrick • Dome Mountain • Deception Lake • Guess Lake/creek • Burbridge Creek • Lemiux Creek • Canyon Creek • McDowell Lake/creek • Helps Creek • Goathorn Creek • Webster Creek • Cabinet Creek • Victor Creek • Marjorie Creek • Betty Creek
Strengths	**Weaknesses**
• Telkwa amenities • Deception lake under-developed	• High Urban development • Heavy industrial activity
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Staging area for access to Telkwa Mountains	• Increased lands and resource use conflicts
Sample of Cultural Features: Fishing, Hunting & Gathering, historic settlements, legends, heritage trails, settlements, gravesites, traditional food preparation sites	

Map reference: L6	**Clan: Laksilyu** **House name: De'ilkwah**

Contact

The Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Lands and Resources department for further information: 847-3630

Features

- Telkwa Pass
- Top Lake
- Tauw Lake
- Fubar Glacier
- Eagle Peak
- Scallon Creek
- Howson Creek
- Pine Creek
- Hudson Bay Mtn.
- Zymoetz River
- Elliot creek
- Starr Creek
- Evening Creek
- Jonas Creek
- Sinclair Creek

Strengths

- Telkwa Pass non-productive forests
- Telkwa Mountains
- Protected area
- Rich in cultural and heritage

Weaknesses

- Approx. 20% 5 year development plan. Heavy activity in the Northeast quadrant
- Capacity

Opportunities

- Cultural and heritage tours
- Staging area for trails in the western quadrant of territory.
- Rich in activities
- Lodge development
- Hut to hut
- Joint Ventures with other interests in major developments

Threats

- Development of traditional territories without Wet'suwet'en participation.

Sample of Cultural Features: Hunting & Gathering, heritage trails, village sites, territorial markers, legends, Winter village site

Map reference: L7	**Clan: Laksilyu** **House name: Nelgi'l'at**

Contact	**Features**	
The Office of the Wet'suwet'en, Lands and Resources department for further information: 847-3630	• Mooseskin Johnny Lake • Sunset Creek • Glacier Creek • Denys Creek	• Loljun Creek • Starr Creek • Telkwa Ranges

Strengths	**Weaknesses**
• Non productive forests • Backcountry • Ideally located between the vicinity of Smithers and Houston • Rich in cultural and heritage values • Wildlife	•

Opportunities	**Threats**
• Lodging • Trails • Hut to hut • Wide range of activities	• Access from Northwest quadrant of territories

Sample of Cultural Features: Heritage trails, hunting & gathering, village sites, fishing, winter village site

4.8 Summary

Clearly, there is a rich and vibrant culture of the local First Nations groups. The evidence of culture and heritage sites is located in the lands throughout all their traditional territories. There are several cultural and heritage sites that are identified, while many sites are merely being discovered. The findings of these sites, however, are currently being redefined along with laws and various provincial and federal legislations.

Historically, an argument exists as to whether or not a federal or provincial responsibility exists with First Nations interests. In the past, interests have been restricted to 'reserve lands', however, recent legal ramifications recognize the cultural relationship to the land and, as a result, the reserve boundaries had been extended to include traditional territories. Therefore, Aboriginal people are entitled to continue in social and economic development on there traditional territories.

This is critically important for tourism planning and development. Governments and industry are merely beginning to integrate First Nations in the development of traditional territories. Much work is needed across the spectrum of planning, zoning, tenures, and management of development of traditional territories.

Overall, the culture is fluid and dynamic. This presents unique challenges in identifying and planning for the development of traditional lands. However, tremendous opportunity exists to create tourism products that promote social and economic development, partnerships, and regional niches to present to global markets.

Chapter
5

5 Land Use Planning and Resource Management in the Study Area

During the final stages of preparing this document, an election was held in the province resulting in the creation of a new government. In June 2001, the new provincial government announced a significant reorganization of government ministries. The Ministry of Small Business, Tourism & Culture (MSBTC) was eliminated with the ministries' major tourism functions being transferred into two new Ministries – the Ministry of Competition, Science & Enterprise and the Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management.

The new **Ministry of Competition, Science and Enterprise** (MCSE) will be the primary ministry responsible for tourism development, led by Minister Rick Thorpe and Deputy Minister Donald Leitch. MCSE will be responsible for Tourism BC, PavCo, and the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre. MCSE "*brings together government programs dedicated to building a more competitive business climate, particularly in the key industries of technology, science and tourism.*" MCSE will be primarily responsible for the development of government policies regarding general tourism sector development and management.

The new **Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management** (MSRM), led by Minister Stan Hagen and Deputy Minister Jon O'Riordan, will be responsible for leading all strategic land, water and resource allocation planning (including tourism land use) as well consolidating all land and water tenures in the province. In creating MSRM, the government consolidated the strategic land and resource planning functions and personnel of the various resource ministries (including former MSBTC tourism land use planners) into one ministry. A key priority of MSRM is to provide faster approvals and greater access to Crown land and resources to protect and create jobs in forestry, tourism, mining, farming, ranging and oil & gas production.

Some of the details and implications of this government ministry reorganization were still unclear at the time of this document's publication. However, the following information was the most recent information available.

5.1 Land Use Planning and Tourism[51]

Historically, tourism planning in BC has occurred at the senior government and the local government levels. Senior governments have been involved primarily with issues concerning research, marketing, human resources and, to a lesser extent, capital. For the provincial government, marketing has been the primary tool for assisting tourism development in the province. Local governments and communities have worked with the tourism sector mostly through the provision of municipal services and infrastructure, but over the last 10 years there has been increasing use of economic development and tourism development planning to stimulate activity and expand the taxation base. In amongst these efforts to promote tourism, there have been some obvious development gaps which have exacerbated in recent years as the tourism industry and the markets it serves mature and become increasingly more sophisticated.

Some of the more significant gaps relate specifically to tourism's role in the Crown land use planning process and Crown land management regime. Historically, that role has been extremely limited, confined mostly to tenure issuance for consumptive activities such as fishing and hunting (i.e. guide outfitting). As the ownership and administration of Crown lands in Canada is mostly controlled by the provinces, provincial land managers effectively decide who uses Crown land and resources and for what purpose.[52] In BC, there is a variety of legislation governing land use, but the *Forest Act, Land Act, Mineral Tenure Act* and *Range Act* cover the vast majority of activity. Controlling ministries include the Ministry of Forests, BC Assets & Lands (BCAL) and Water, Land & Air Protection (formerly the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks). Tourism interests are not represented in any of the above acts and none of the above ministries have tourism mandates. Multiple-use concepts have been articulated within strategic level language but not embodied in actual land management practices. The former Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture had no control over Crown land use and they have not historically maintained any tourism offices outside of Vancouver and Victoria. The result of the above factors is an absence of tourism representation within both the land use planning process and land management practice[53].

Tourism development in BC is expanding at rates well beyond overall economic growth rates. An increasing part of the industry is oriented to outdoor recreation products that rely in large part on access to the Crown land and resource base. The importance of Crown land to tourism industry development is seen in literature produced by the Council of Tourism Associations of British Columbia (COTA). At the annual BC Tourism Industry Conference held in February 2000, the industry ranked land use and marketing as the two top issues of concern for tourism in the province. Land use planning that values tourism interests, involvement of tourism interests in land use decisions, the availability of Crown land for purchase and tenure and relations between tourism and the forest industry were some of the issues considered important in COTA's most recent membership survey.[54]

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[51] Planning and governance for "tourism" in the Province of BC is presently in a state of flux due to the complete re-organization of the provincial cabinet and line agencies. How and where 'tourism' fits into the new government structure is discussed in Section 5.3.6.

[52] The federal government exercises some control in the areas of environmental impacts, fisheries, migratory species, navigation and shipping, and transboundary movement of resource products. The British North America Act vested the ownership of natural resources with the provinces.

[53] Tourism land use planning resources have been moved to the new Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management.

Some progress has been made in recent years to improve tourism representation in the land use decision-making process. The Land and Resource Management Planning (LRMP) process has at least created a forum for discussing multiple use and sustainability concepts and tourism's possible role. The Tourism Opportunity Strategy (TOS) is a further step to sound land use because they profile the current status of local tourism development, provide detailed information required for sub-regional or community level planning, and can be used to identify, develop and promote appropriate, sustainable tourism development opportunities.

5.2 Ecotourism and Adventure Travel Strategy for British Columbia

Ecotourism and adventure travel (including cultural & heritage tourism) is one of the fastest growing sectors of BC's tourism industry. An expanding market of knowledgeable travellers is looking for spectacular settings and challenging activities. This strategy lays out a role for the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture, and the provincial Government generally, in fostering growth in the ecotourism and adventure travel sector while ensuring benefit to communities and resources that the industry depends on. Canada still accounts for only a fraction of the North American ecotourism and adventure travel market. Despite the recent growth in ecotourism and adventure travel in British Columbia, there is considerable room for growth of the industry.

Entrepreneurs and communities play a leading role in expanding the ecotourism and adventure travel industry. Government, however, has a unique and important role in fostering this growth. This role includes: strategic investments to create new opportunities; promotion of high standards of quality practice; and establishment of regulatory and tax regimes that maintain the vigour of the industry.

Ecotourism and adventure travel can make a positive contribution to community economic development and diversification. But care needs to be taken that growth in this sector does not harm host communities or the resource base.

The ecotourism and adventure travel industry is dynamic and innovative; products evolve continuously in response to a demanding and competitive market. This situation challenges Government to develop regulations that protect sensitive resources without unnecessarily impeding the industry. Wherever possible, regulation and resource protection should be developed and implemented cooperatively by industry, Government, and host communities. Industry-led codes of practice, community involvement, and local recreation planning can help to maximize benefits to each sector.

Ecotourism and adventure travel products are closely linked to other tourism sectors. This sector addresses the core of British Columbia's "Super, Natural" image. Many of the images and stories that promote tourism in British Columbia refer to ecotourism and suggest that visitors who do not participate in ecotourism and adventure travel often vicariously share these experiences.

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[54] TREK International Inc., 2000. COTA Membership Survey Results: Land Use Issues October/November 2000. Council of Tourism Associations of BC.

5.3 Tourism and Crown-Land Management

Several ministries and agencies of the Provincial Government of British Columbia that focus on resource management play a major to minor role in tourism[55]. Understanding of their mandates and the nature and extent of their roles in tourism, particularly as they relate to the pursuit of tourism opportunities in the study area, will assist in assigning responsibilities to the required actions to pursue the short listed opportunities in the tourism action plan at the end of this document. To that end, summarized below are their respective mandates and roles in planning, reviewing, approving and/or regulating backcountry and commercial recreation, including tourism.

5.3.1 Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management

The new Ministry of Sustainable Resource Management (MSRM), is responsible for leading all strategic level land & water planning as well as all resource allocation planning in the province. Therefore MSRM is responsible for the completion of larger-scale strategic land, water and resource plans (e.g. Land & Resource Management Plans); as well as leading the development of smaller-scale strategic landscape level planning to implement completed CORE Plans and LRMPs.

In creating MSRM, the government consolidated the strategic land and resource planning functions and personnel of various resource ministries (including former MSBTC tourism land use planners) into one ministry. A key priority of MSRM is to provide faster approvals and greater access to Crown land and resources to protect and create jobs in forestry, tourism, mining, farming, ranging and oil & gas production.

Therefore it is anticipated that MSRM will play a role in ensuring that strategic level plans recognize the land and resource issues of the tourism sector; and that the tourism sector has access to the crown land and resources necessary for sector expansion. The actual tenuring and management of crown land and resources for tourism and commercial recreation remains with BC Assets and Lands Corporation.

5.3.2 British Columbia Assets and Land Corporation

British Columbia Assets and Land Corporation (BCAL) is a specialized agency of the provincial government that reports to the Minister Responsible for Sustainable Resource Management. Its mandate is to make Crown land and assets available for environmentally responsible economic growth and public benefit. It does this through responsible development, marketing and leasing of Crown land for residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural and recreational use. Commercial recreation is recognized by BCAL as important to economic diversification and rural development across British Columbia. With 92% of land in the province held by the Crown, BCAL's responsibility is significant.

Since October 1998, BCAL has been the provincial agency charged with the responsibility of managing commercial recreation on Crown Lands. BCAL's aim is to proactively manage commercial recreation activities and development opportunities. In addition to higher-level policies, BCAL has a *Commercial Recreation on Crown Land Policy* (approved and implemented May 1998) to guide management of commercial recreation activities. The goal of this policy is to maintain "an environment that is naturally diverse and healthy, and enriches peoples lives."

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[55] This governance structure in BC has recently undergone a complete reorganization due to a new Liberal government succeeding to power. Line agency mandates and responsibilities have changed significantly and the reader is advised to check with their local Government Agent's office for new mandates and responsibilities.

Strategic principles guiding BCAL's Commercial Recreation Policy are as follows:

Relationship with First Nations – Provide economic development opportunities for First Nations, and consult with First Nations on commercial recreation proposals, consistent with provincial and ministry guidelines with respect to aboriginal rights and title.

Environmental Stewardship – Protect and maintain environmental integrity, using land and resources within their capacity to sustain use, and maintain biological diversity.

Public Access and Use – Maintain public access to enter and traverse Crown land as a primary consideration in evaluating proposals for commercial recreation. As a general guide, legitimate reasons to manage public access may include the potential for conflict, environmental, and public safety concerns. An additional principle is to provide a balanced mix of recreational experiences, both commercial and non-commercial in nature.

Business Certainty – Ensure that new commercial recreation applications are compatible with the operational needs of existing commercial recreation businesses.

Economic Diversification – Provide for an environmentally sustainable, responsive and vibrant commercial recreation industry. Ensure that commercial recreation operations are considered as integral parts of diversification strategies for communities and regions in transition.

Public Consultation – Involve other interests through a fair, open and consultative process which takes into account locally-established priorities, and public interests, while not fettering the Minister's ultimate decision-making authority.

Inter-agency Co-ordination – Manage Crown lands in an integrated, co-operative and open manner, with involvement from provincial government agencies, local governments, First Nations and the public. Where they exist, use agreements between agencies to develop government responses to commercial recreation proposals. In addition, consider all government commitments for resource use during the review of commercial recreation proposals.

Land Use Planning – Ensure that land allocation decisions are consistent with approved local, regional and provincial land use plans, including strategic plans such as Land and Resource Management Plans, Local Resource Use Plans and local government plans, with special consideration to commercial recreation values identified in these plans.

The Province's Commercial Recreation Policy applies to all forms of outdoor recreation activities authorized by BCAL to be carried out on provincial Crown land on a fee-for-service basis (some exceptions do apply). Such activities include commercial/mechanized ski guiding, commercial hunting and fishing and other commercial recreation activities requiring physical improvements. The policy does not pertain to incidental commercial use of Crown land; commercial recreation activities undertaken within a provincial park, recreation area or protected area (this requires permits through BC Parks) or commercial alpine developments (subject to the Commercial Alpine Ski Policy). Protocols are in place between BCAL, the Ministry of Forests and the Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks with respect to the approval and adjudication of commercial recreation use proposals for Crown land or activities crossing park or recreation area boundaries into crown land. Public recreation uses of a non-commercial nature proposed for provincial forests are approved by the Ministry of Forests.

The Land Act requires all businesses using Crown Land to be licensed. BCAL must provide commercial recreation operators with permits that give them clearly defined rights to use Crown Land, thereby giving local industry a greater degree of certainty. The licenses, permits and leases granted reflect the classification of the commercial recreation activity: short term investigative uses require investigative use permits, short term low impact uses require temporary permits, long term uses of extensive areas require licenses of occupation, and long term site specific uses require leases. Sets out in the policy document for each of the classified activities are the rights granted, applicability, term, pricing structure, client requirements and responsibilities.

At the same time, tenuring and management of Crown land for commercial recreation must be consistent with approved local, regional and provincial land use plans and recreation management plans.

BCAL's approval process allows time for each application to be reviewed by provincial ministries such as the Ministry of Forests and the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection. Local interest groups also provide feedback before BCAL makes a decision. BCAL understands that working co-operatively with other agencies and community groups will help to speed up the referral input and overall application procedure.

5.3.3 Ministry of Water, Land & Air Protection

The Ministry of Water, Land & Air Protection (MWLAP – formerly MELP) has responsibility across British Columbia for the management, protection and enhancement of the province's environment, including its wildlife, water, land and air resources, its Crown land and its provincial parks, recreation areas and ecological reserves.

BC Parks is the agency responsible under the Ministry for the management of all matters concerning the park system, including maintenance of the provincial park system's campground and trail infrastructure and determining and overseeing appropriate commercial recreation tourism activities in the parks. The purpose of commercial recreation services within parks is to provide park visitors with an opportunity to appreciate the natural and cultural heritage of BC Parks. Appropriate commercially delivered recreation services widen the range of opportunities available to all park visitors. The preservation of park heritage values takes precedence over the provision of recreational opportunities. All services provided by the private sector within a provincial park must be consistent with the approved objectives of that park.

An appropriate commercial opportunity is one which has traditionally been conducted in the park system and/or is deemed compatible with BC Park's values. It allows a park visitor to appreciate the attributes and features of a park in a manner approved by the park management plan and/or park objectives. The opportunity and how it is provided must not conflict with the stewardship mandate of BC Parks, and should take into consideration potential impacts on the park environment and other park visitors. If an opportunity new to the park area is being considered, management may test the appropriateness, the public perception to, and the environmental impact of a service prior to decision of whether or not to issue a proposal package for the opportunity.

When the private sector is invited to provide services to the public in provincial parks, it must result in the maintenance or enhancement of recreational opportunities. Such invitations will be given appropriate public visibility. Exclusive commercial recreation opportunities will be competed for, usually through a proposal call process.

Park management may respond to unsolicited proposals for the commercial delivery of a recreational opportunity by determining, with solicited input where needed, the appropriateness of the proposed recreation opportunity and the commercial delivery of it. The decision will take into account the type of activity, size of operation, anticipated impacts, the existence of previous requests from other proponents, the existence of competing businesses both within and outside of the park offering similar services, and directions provided through a management plan.

In recognition of the actual and potential impact of park based commercial recreation operations on other agencies and/or interests outside, BC Parks will cooperate with BC Assets and Lands Corporation, National Parks, Provincial Governments, First Nations, various interest groups, corporations, agencies and individuals to achieve park objectives.

Many of the protected areas are available, in principle and where appropriate, for commercial tourism and recreation. These development opportunities will be developed during area-specific management planning, which will also recognize the protection of the special natural values of each area and the provision for public non-commercial recreation.

5.3.4 Ministry of Forests

The mandate of the Ministry of Forests (MoF) is to plan and manage the timber resource to ensure economic and social benefits for the province, immediate to long term. This includes managing, protecting and conserving the forest resources and their recreation values. The recreation program of the Ministry of Forests has a two-fold mission: to provide the opportunity for recreation experiences and benefits by protecting the recreation resource, and to manage the use of the recreation resource. This mission extends to the Crown lands of the province outside parks and settled areas.

This mission is carried out within the context of the Ministry's overall integrated resource management mandate and in cooperation with the recreation programs of other government agencies, public groups and the private sector. The Provincial Forest recreation resource encompasses the full spectrum of recreation values and opportunities, including scenic landscapes, wilderness, cultural and heritage landmarks, and developed recreation facilities.

The Ministry's Recreation Program's goals are threefold. First, to identify, protect and manage the Provincial Forest recreation resource by:

- maintaining an inventory of the recreation resource
- assessing the use, demand and value of forest recreation

- ensuring that recreation (including landscape and wilderness) values are considered in resource management decisions
- Second, to manage the public's use of the Provincial Forest recreation resource by:
- developing and maintaining a network of recreation sites and trails
- educating and informing the public about recreation opportunities and the impact of recreation use on other forest resources
- enforcing recreation management policy and procedures

Third, to retain or enhance forest landscape values in keeping with the concepts and principles of integrated resource management by:

- identifying, classifying and recording visual resources and values
- identifying desirable or acceptable levels of landscape alteration
- establishing visual quality objectives for managing visual resources and values
- developing design solutions for meeting visual quality objectives

In terms of Land Use Planning, Ministry of Forests staff are actively involved in the land use studies and plans being prepared within the Bulkley Forest Region. Regional staff chair the Inter-Agency Planning Team for the Sub-Regional Planning processes, and district staff are key members.

5.3.4.1 FOREST RENEWAL BRITISH COLUMBIA

Forest Renewal British Columbia (FRBC) is an independent Crown Corporation mandated to manage and direct investments to renew the forest economy of British Columbia. A primary objective is providing support to forest communities that are experiencing major industry and job reduction.

The Communities Business Unit of FRBC currently runs the Forest Community Economic Development Program, with associated investment guidelines, under which tourism initiatives are understood to be eligible for funding.

FRBC provided funding to MSBTC for this and other Tourism Opportunity Strategies currently being developed on behalf of the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture.

5.3.5 BC Fisheries

BC Fisheries, in the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, has direct responsibility for the management of the freshwater recreation fisheries, aquaculture activities, marine plant harvesting and for the regulation, sale, inspection and processing of fish. The province also exercises delegated authority under the federal Fisheries Act for the management of the non-salmon freshwater fisheries and wild oyster harvest. The goal of the provincial Fisheries program is to conserve the natural diversity of fish and fish habitat and to sustainably manage freshwater sport fishing in BC.

5.3.5.1 FISHERIES RENEWAL BC

An independent Crown Corporation, Fisheries Renewal BC has a legislated mandate to provide all residents, businesses, local governments, affinity groups and tourism operators of British Columbia with opportunities to participate in a meaningful way in provincially-led initiatives directed at fishery renewal and protection. Its current program and strategy priorities are recreational fisheries diversification and development and community-based fisheries job creation. It is currently funding a $100,000 joint sector/government partnership initiative to develop a vision and strategy for the freshwater recreational fishery that is intended to serve as a blueprint for the partners to jointly shape and direct the fishery.

5.3.6 Tourism British Columbia

The mandate of Tourism BC, an independent Crown corporation, has three dimensions: to promote development and growth of the tourism industry, to increase and distribute revenues and employment across the province and to increase the economic benefits of this industry to all residents of British Columbia. It pursues this mandate along several streams – marketing and sales, visitor information services, accommodation services and standards, education and training, research, and business development. Tourism BC has offices in Victoria and Vancouver. It works in partnership with the Northern British Columbia Tourism Association and the regional Visitor InfoCentres.

5.3.7 British Columbia Environmental Assessment Office

Subject to legislation, the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) is the provincial agency responsible for coordinating assessment of the impacts of major development proposals in the province. Sectors for which it undertakes such assessments are broad and include tourism. The purpose of the review process is to identify any foreseeable adverse short or long term impacts of a development proposal from environmental, economic, social, cultural, heritage and health perspectives; to then determine ways to eliminate, minimize or mitigate them; and to then make recommendations to grant or refuse a project approval certificate. The Minister of the Environment, Lands and Parks and a second appropriate minister, then makes consideration of and decision on the recommendations.

5.4 Land Use Planning In The Bulkley Plan Area

5.4.1 Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan

The Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP) was approved in March 1998. It provides the following direction for Outdoor Recreation and Tourism:

> *Tourism and outdoor recreation is a growing industry in the Bulkley Plan area. It is thus very important to manage this resource to maintain or enhance opportunities for a diverse range of recreational values and uses across the biophysical settings of the area.*
>
> Agencies will:

- *Identify and consider areas of scenic values in landscape unit plans;*
- *Identify and provide opportunities for future backcountry tourism development; and*
- *Request input and assistance in the management of existing and new recreation sites and trails.*

The Bulkley LRMP provides the provincial government and other users with four levels of land and resource management direction: General Management Direction; Resource Management Zones; Ecosystem Network and Enhanced Timber Development Areas; and Planning Unit Management Direction.

General Management Direction is provided in 11 resource categories (biodiversity, access, timber, water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, ***visual quality***, range, ***outdoor recreation*** and ***tourism***, subsurface resources, cultural heritage resources and future planning processes). These directions apply over the entire 760,000 hectares of the Plan Area.

Six Resource Management Zones are delineated in the Plan Area (Protected, Special Management 1 and 2, Integrated Resource Management, Settlement, and Agriculture/Wildlife). Each zone has distinct biophysical characteristics, resource issues or resource management directions (Exhibit 12).

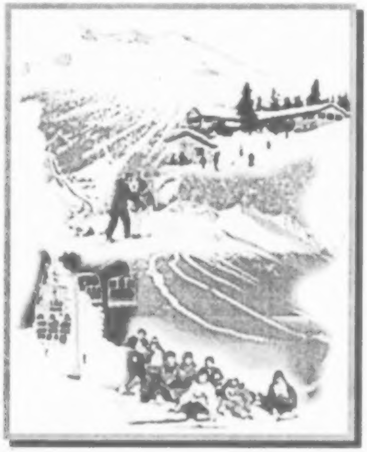
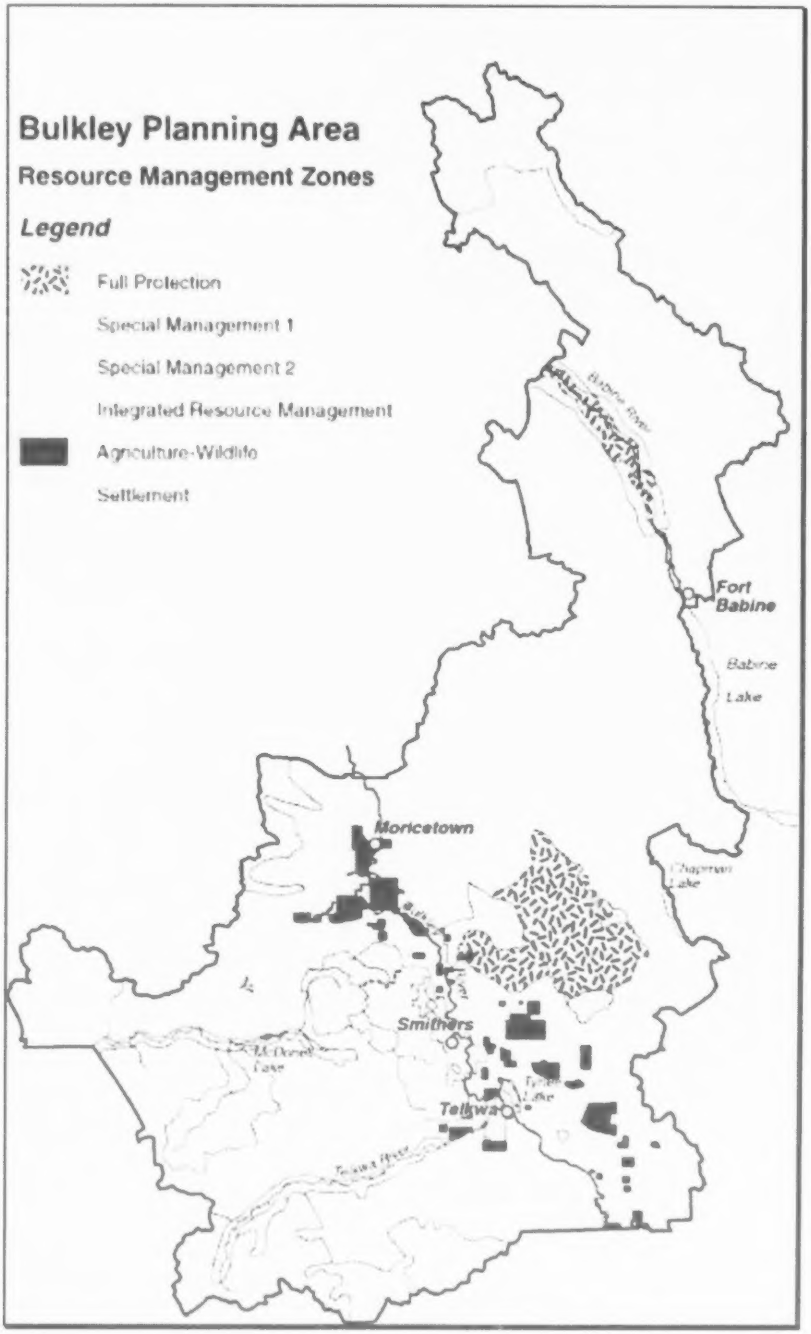


Exhibit 12: Bulkley LRMP – Resource Management Zones


Bulkley Planning Area
Resource Management Zones
Legend
Full Protection
Special Management 1
Special Management 2
Integrated Resource Management
Agriculture-Wildlife
Settlement
Babine River
Fort Babine
Babine Lake
Moricetown
Bulkley River
Chapman Lake
Smithers
McDonell Lake
Tyhee Lake
Telkwa
Telkwa River

The LRMP also subdivides the resource management zones into 12 Landscape Planning Units, and provides specific management direction for each of 50 units or sub-units. These unit plans divide the Bulkley area by watersheds and contain specific direction related to both outdoor recreation and tourism. Following are some of these directions:

Exhibit 13: Bulkley LRMP – Resource Management Directions

- ***Unit 1 Upper Nilkitkwa***: Maintain the primitive setting and experience while permitting sensitive mineral exploration and development
- ***Unit 2 Babine River*** (Including lower Nilkitkwa, Nichyeskwa River, Nilkitkwa Lake, Rainbow Alley & French Peak): Maintain the provincially significant angling values associated with the Babine River. (Note: this planning unit is now contains Babine River Corridor Provincial Park)
- Unit 3 Torkelson Lake (Including Netalzul peak & shoreline of Babine Lake): Special attention will be paid to sensitive viewscapes seen from Babine Lake, Nilkitkwa Forestry road, recreational lakes and roads.
- ***Unit 4 Harold Price*** (includes Harold Price Creek, parts of Blunt & Netalzul peaks): Development plans will pay special attention to views from Touhy Lake
- ***Unit 5 Babine Mountains*** (Includes Harold Price meadows, Babine Mountains Park & surrounding areas, Blunt & Seaton area): Due to high visibility of this area from viewpoints at both low and high elevations, future industrial development must be sensitive to and minimize impact on visual quality. Maintain recreational quality of alpine area. Protecting trails or partially re-routing them if necessary will maintain hiking trail access to Babine Mountains. Manage to maintain the high recreation opportunities in the Blunt/Seaton area.
- ***Unit 6 Deep Creek*** (Includes hills & lakes east of Bulkley valley): Relevant agencies will coordinate a planned approach to present and future activities and will review options for backcountry recreation
- ***Unit 7 Bulkley Valley*** Consider visual quality in community and resource development. Agencies will provide management to address recreational user conflicts including the Bulkley River. Encourage use of this planning unit as the front country service hub for tourism and recreation in the planning area. Maintain existing recreation trails. Where possible, provide opportunities to establish new trails that link the settled area with surrounding forest lands.
- ***Unit 8 Corya*** (Includes John Brown, Corya and Boulder drainages in the Rocher Deboule Range): Views are highly sensitive and development plans will include prescriptions that manage the views from Highway 16. Promote recreational opportunities. Maintain and enhance linking trail systems. Manage with emphasis on recreation. Encourage commercial backcountry recreation development subject to review process.
- ***Unit 9 Kitseguecla*** (Includes Kitseguecla drainage, Rocky Ridge & North West end of Hudson Bay Range): Development plans will protect the long distance views of Rocky Ridge. Manage to protect the quality of experience and environment in view of the current intensive use and the resort tenures.
- ***Unit 10 Hudson Bay Mountain*** Encourage a network of hiking trails. Review and approval processes will ensure reclamation will occur following any industrial activities. Development plans must maintain visual quality. Permit commercial backcountry tourism and public recreation development, subject to visual quality constraints and normal review and approval processes.
- ***Unit 11 Telkwa River*** (Includes Telkwa drainage, Telkwa Ranges, Howson Ranges, Microwave Plateau, Sinclair Range): Permit wilderness recreation and backcountry tourism, subject to goat baseline study and caribou habitat. High elevations are visually sensitive from many areas. Special attention will be paid to views from Highway 16 and the ski hill. Maintain the values associate with the Telkwa River environment that makes it desirable for outdoor recreation and tourism activities. Maintain opportunities for high recreation use of Microwave area by bikers, hikers, skiers and

snowmobilers.

- ***Unit 12 Copper*** (Includes Copper River, Mulwain, Red Canyon, Serb, Silvern Creeks, many lakes, Caribou Mtn and associated coastal ranges): Maintain existing trails and encourage linked hiking trails to Hudson Bay Mountain, Promote backcountry use and recognize the future potential. Permit commercial backcountry development subject to normal review and approval process. Ensure new, permanent roads are at least 1km from the Copper River. Maintain angling opportunities associated with the Copper River. Special attention will be paid to visual quality as seen from the Copper River, Serb Creek, McDonnell Forest Road, and the Seven Sisters. Serb Creek, Mulwain Creek have high potential for backcountry wilderness experiences, maintain in a primitive state by managing for low intensity, low impact recreation.

5.4.1.1 BULKLEY LRMP PROJECT AREAS & DEGREE OF COMPLETION[56]

Incremental strategies and tasks in the Bulkley LRMP have been grouped into 12 Project Areas for the purpose of implementation reporting. Exhibit 14 lists these Project Areas, the number of tasks in each, and provides an overall summary of the degree of completion in each. The degree of completion was derived from a weighted average of the degree of completion of each task included in the Project Area.

Exhibit 14: Bulkley LRMP – Project Implementation Summary

PROJECT AREA	NUMBER OF INCREMENTAL TASKS	DEGREE OF COMPLETION
Access	11	Substantially complete
Biodiversity	7	Substantially complete
Fish Habitat Mgt.	2	Underway
Planning	7	Substantially complete
Protected Areas	4	Underway
Range	3	Not started
Recreation	10	Underway
Subsurface	2	Ongoing
Timber	2	Substantially complete
Visual	12	Substantially complete
Watershed Mgt.	4	Substantially complete
Wildlife Habitat Mgt.	8	Underway

Source: Bulkley LRMP Implementation Monitoring Report, Prince Rupert Inter-agency Management Committee, Chamberlin Consulting Group, February 8, 2001.

As of February 2001, 33 incremental tasks have been substantially completed, 16 are underway, 8 are ongoing and 15 have not been initiated. The primary reason for the high degree of completion of incremental tasks has been the vigorous development of Landscape Unit Plans by MOF and BCE staff. Several of the tasks not yet initiated will come on line when the Bulkley Valley Landscape Plan and the Bulkley Recreation Strategy have been completed.

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[56] Up-to-date information regarding the status of the Bulkley LRMP has been sourced from: Bulkley LRMP Implementation Monitoring Report, Prince Rupert Inter-agency Management Committee, Chamberlin Consulting Group, February 8, 2001.

5.4.1.2 BULKLEY LRMP TASK STATUS SUMMARIES

The following tables[57] provide a status statement for selected incremental tasks included in the 12 Project Areas. For the purposes of this report, summary tables are only provided the following project areas, which have a direct correlation to tourism and outdoor adventure experiences:

- Access;
- Parks;
- Recreation; and
- Visual.

Each Project Area is associated with a principal lead agency, and therefore the tasks listed also represent a work plan for that agency.

Exhibit 15: Bulkley LRMP Status – Project A: Access

Project A: Access (MOF)

Project Status: Substantially complete

Objective: Provide roads to access timber, mineral, range and recreational resources within the plan area, while minimizing the impact of human disturbance on fish, wildlife, and other environmental resources.

Status of Tasks

1. Ensure opportunity for public input on any future circular routes:

Section 2.1.2.1 of the Bulkley LRMP reads that circular routes that connect to adjacent Districts should be discouraged wherever possible. Potential circular routes include the following:

BABINE RIVER

- One of 3 timber harvest access options under consideration is a circular route linking Bulkley and Kispiox District road networks (the Nichyeskwa Connector option).

Public input on route selection was sought from April 1 to May 31, 2000:

- District MOF and BCE prepared and mailed copies of an information pamphlet describing access options, to First Nations, stakeholders and interested public, to solicit written comment and advise of open houses.
- Open houses were advertised (by radio and local paper) and conducted in Smithers, Hazelton, and Fort Babine.
- Two public meetings were held: one for mill workers at Skeena Cellulose, Smithers; one at a Town of Smithers council meeting. A further meeting was conducted with the Community Resources Board.
- 40 written responses were received. The majority of comments regarding the Nichyeskwa Connector option were unfavourable.
- A joint MOF/BCE Regional Director decision on access option is expected early in 2001. The decision and rationale will be made publicly available. Access management objectives and strategies will be developed for inclusion in Kispiox and Bulkley Landscape Unit Plans (LUP's) - by ~October 2001 for Bulkley LUP's.

BLUNT

- There is potential for development of a circular route connecting Bulkley/Kispiox Districts in the Touhy Lake area. The licensee has agreed not to propose any access option that would result in a circular route.

COPPER

- There was concern that the licensee would propose a connector linking McDonell FSR with Kispiox TSA via the Kitsuns Main road, thus establishing a Bulkley/Kispiox District circular route. In their 2000-2006 FDP, Skeena Cellulose Inc. has proposed two access options; neither will result in a circular route.

DEEP CREEK

- The Deep Creek Planning Committee formed in 1992 to review timber harvest access options into the Deep

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[57] All tables have been sourced, Ibid No.: 56

Creek area. Several options were proposed, but the committee as a whole didn't strongly favour one.

- An access option by way of Canyon Creek was proposed as a result of public input from several open houses. The District Manager approved this option in July 1994. A Deep Creek Access Management Plan was developed as a component of the 1998-2001 SBFEP Forest Development Plan (FDP) (as required by LRMP Specific Management Direction for Access, for the Deep Creek Planning Unit). The FDP was approved by the DM, upon conclusion and consideration of public input provided during FDP review.
- The Canyon Creek FSR is now mostly constructed. It currently links Babine Lake Road to Deception Lake road resulting in a within-District circular route (Hwy 16 to Deception Lake FSR to Canyon Creek FSR to Babine Lake Road to Hwy 16). A connector does link Canyon Creek FSR into a road system in Morice TSA, but this connector is not maintained and is impassible except to four-wheel drive vehicles.
- An extension of Canyon Creek FSR to Kerr Road is under construction that could potentially have resulted in another within-District circular route (Hwy 16 to Quick Road to Kerr Road to Canyon Creek FSR to Babine Lake Road to Hwy 16). Because Quick residents had social concern with haul past Quick school, it was agreed that haul would be north via Canyon Creek FSR. This agreement is reflected in the 2000-2006 SBFEP FDP's Deep Creek Access Management Plan.
- In both cases a circular route connecting to other Districts won't occur.

HAROLD PRICE

- In their latest FDP submission, Skeena Cellulose Inc. initially proposed an access option through Suskwa Pass that would have resulted in a circular route between Bulkley/Kispiox Districts. Upon discussion with MOF District staff, this option was dropped.

KITSEGUECLA

- No circular route has been proposed.

TELKWA

- A former circular route linking Bulkley to Morice Forest District (Houston to Pine Creek via the Telkwa River main road; Pine Creek to McDonell Forest Service Road; McDonell FSR to Hwy 16; Hwy 16 to Houston) has been discontinued. The connector at Pine Creek was permanently deactivated in 1995. No other connectors to Morice District have been proposed.

2. *Identify hard surface roads and trails.*

The context of this requirement is that ATV's are to be permitted only on hard surface roads and trails in sensitive terrain.

HARD SURFACE ROADS

- Hard surface roads are shown on forest cover maps. Maps are updated on a 2-year cycle, using licensee GPS'd road locations and satellite imagery to ensure continued accuracy.

TRAILS

- Many but not all appear on forest cover maps. Dependent on visability from aerial photography/satellite imagery.
- District recreation maps show general location of major recreation trails. These are currently being GPS'd by MOF District, in order based on their Trail Attractiveness Rating as assigned by the Bulkley Strategic Recreation Study (in progress). Most should be GPS'd within the next 3 years – GPS'd locations are being assembled onto a digital trail map.
- First Nations trails are also being GPS'd by MOF District, in order based on their cultural significance. The length of time to completion of this project is uncertain. Some but not all trail locations will be added to the digital map - certain information is confidential.

3. *Road deactivation may be necessary to minimize off-road vehicle damage to fragile ecosystems.*

- Road deactivation has relatively poor success in minimizing off-road damage to fragile ecosystems.
- Forest licensees commonly deactivate haul roads after operations have ceased in an area. The level of deactivation can be permanent, semi-permanent or temporary in nature, depending on the future need for the road (i.e. the road may need to be quickly reactivated for additional hauling).
- Only permanent road deactivation is likely to deter off-road vehicles. Permanent road deactivation is commonly conducted to two standards: one that results in access suitable for four-wheel drive (4WD) trucks; and one

suitable only for ATV's. The choice of standard is highly influenced by the need to meet the requirements of other resource users (e.g. mineral and range tenure holders). However, by definition access to some form of off-road vehicle will still be possible post-deactivation.

- Minimization of off-road damage to fragile ecosystems can be accomplished with better success using strategically-placed access control structures (i.e. a physical barrier, such as a gate or a rockpile). Examples of numerous existing access control structures whose main purpose is to protect fragile ecosystems include the gate on Howson Creek Road (controlling access into Mooseskin Johnny Lake and associated wetlands), and several gates controlling access to alpine in the Babine Mountains Park. The need for an access control structure is currently reviewed on a situational basis.

4. ***Complete Coordinated Access Management Plan, including access options from the south side of Reiseter Creek and protection of hiking trail access to Babine Mountains:***

- The Reiseter Access planning process was completed August 2000. Several access options were assessed through the Reiseter Access planning process, and an access control strategy has been developed for the selected route. Strategies for protection of trails into Babine Park in case of harvest are provided in Landscape Unit Plans (DM Policy as of September 1999).

5. ***Permanent access structures to stay 1 km from Kitseguecla R and branch roads within 1 km will be deactivated:***

- An objective in the Trout Creek/Kitseguecla Landscape Unit Plan (LUP) reads "maintain the classified angling opportunity along the Kitseguecla River". The strategy for this objective (DM Policy as of September 1999) is to restrict access using a deactivation strategy, access control point, or temporary roads. The licensee's FDP's are currently consistent with LUP direction.

6. ***Maintain walk-in only status for Jack Mould Lake.***

- Jack Mould Lake is protected from future road development by its incorporation into a core ecosystem. LUP strategies (DM Policy as of November 1998) prohibits road building within core ecosystems unless alternative access is impossible, which is not the situation here. To date, walk-in only status has been maintained.

7. ***Consult with existing guide and Morice District regarding a Telkwa River and Scallion Ck. access control point.***

- BCE/MOF District and PIR consulted with the guide outfitter (McIntyre), the Wet'suwet'en Treaty Office, and Morice District in 1997. Although having the access control at Scallion Creek addressed BCE objectives for caribou management, Wet'su'weten concerns were best addressed by placing the control on the north side of the Telkwa River. The parties agreed.
- The proposed control location was advertised in the Telkwa LUP. LUP's underwent critical public review in 1998, and in the absence of adverse comment the location was approved and the control point established. A map showing the control location is in the Telkwa LUP, copies of which are publicly available. To date, the control point has met its objectives.

8. ***Address concerns about impact of main road on Telkwa river corridor (recreational, fish, water quality and ecological values), and assess options of altering main road access.***

- At the time of LRMP development, the Telkwa River main road had structural problems resulting in the need for large annual expenditures for maintenance and slope stabilization, to deter sediment transfer into the Telkwa River. The LRMP table was aware of an ongoing study to assess the feasibility of relocating the main road up onto Hydro hill to bypass some of the problem areas, and (it is MOF District's understanding) wanted to give effect to any results from that process.
- Ultimately the new option was impractical from both an ecological and an economic perspective, because it resulted in a need to develop new access structures on both sides of the Telkwa River including a new bridge over Howson Creek. It was decided to maintain the current location. Slope stabilization work has since been completed, and the issue is no longer a concern.

9. ***Prevent access from crossing Serb Creek from any direction.***

- Access restriction for Serb creek are identified and enforced through the Copper LUP.

10. ***Provide access and linking trail systems to Upper Corya Creek.***

- Activity should be corrected to "Maintain and enhance linking trail system; provide (recreational) access to (alpine areas at the headwaters of Corya Creek, Boulder Creek)". Boulder Creek Road and Corya Creek Trail (into Corya Basin) provide access – they are not currently linked.

- The Bulkley RAMP (approved as DM Policy in 1997) designated Corya Basin summer non-motorized and Boulder Creek Road as summer motorized, and reinforced the LRMP requirement to maintain and enhance linking trail systems.
- The Corya LUP recognizes the Boulder Creek Road (Corya Creek Trail will be recognized in the next amendment), and provides strategies to ensure the trailbed is maintained in case of harvest.
- The Bulkley Strategic Recreation Study (in progress) doesn't currently identify activities to link trail systems in Upper Corya Creek – the limited recreation budget will be used for trails with a High Attractiveness rating (Boulder Creek Road has Moderate Attractiveness; Corya Creek Trail has Low Attractiveness). Development of this link is a very low priority.

11. ***Maintain accessibility of Cronin Road and maintain hiking trail access to Babine Mountains.***

- The Chapman and Reiseter LUPs provide strategies (approved as DM Policy in 1998) to ensure that trailbeds for major trails are maintained in case of harvest.
- The Bulkley Strategic Recreation Study (in progress) assigns a Very High Attractiveness rating to Cronin Road and several well-known Babine Mountains hiking trails (e.g. Little Joe Lakes, Onion Mountain, etc.) – the proposed strategy for trails with this rating is a high maintenance priority when recreation funding is available.
- This task is also identified in the Recreation and Subsurface Projects.

Exhibit 16: Bulkley LRMP Status – Project E: Protected Areas

Project E: Protected Areas (Parks)

Project Status: Underway

Objective: Develop and implement management plans for new protected areas designated by the Bulkley LRMP.

Status of Tasks

1. ***Complete Babine River Corridor park management plan.***
2. ***Complete management plan for the Babine Mountains Recreation Area and the Driftwood Extension.***
3. ***Complete management plans for the Goal 2 Protected Areas of Burnt Cabin Bog, Boulder Creek, Netalzul Meadow and Waterfall, Nilkitkwa Lake, Rainbow Alley and Call Lake.***
4. ***Manage Goal 1 and 2 Protected Areas in accordance with their designation.***

- A modification of the initial zoning (from Wilderness to Natural Environment) was made to permit continued access to Harry Orm's cabin.
- As an initial step toward management plans, Management Direction Statements have been completed for the Babine River Park, Driftwood Extension to Babine Mountains Park, and the Goal 2 areas of Burnt Cabin Bog Ecological Reserve, Netazul Meadows Park, Nilkitkwa Lake Park, Rainbow Alley Park, Call Lake Park, Driftwood Canyon Park and Tyee Lake Park.
- Priorities for the development of full management plans are Babine RiverPark, Babine Mountains Park, Tyee Lake Park, and Call Lake Park, in that order. The other protected areas are not considered to be high priorities at this time.
- Given other district priorities and funding limitations, initiation of the Babine river management plan is about 5 years away. Total costs for these four plans would be about $80-$100,000. Priorities for park planning in the District are reviewed annually, and advice from the Monitoring Committee on need and priority would be welcomed.

Exhibit 17: Bulkley LRMP Status – Project G: Recreation

Project G: Recreation (MOF)

Project Status: Underway

Objective: Maintain or enhance opportunities for a diverse range of recreational values and uses across the biophysical settings of the area through a Recreation Access Management Plan and a Recreation Plan.

Status of Tasks

1. Identify snowmobile trails through forest plantations in areas of conflict.

- The Bulkley RAMP (DM Policy as of July 1997) identified and mapped the general locations of several well-known winter motorized trails; the Bulkley Strategic Recreation Study (in progress) will identify and map others. These trails are either currently listed in Landscape Unit Plans, or will be through future LUP amendments. LUP's provide strategies (DM Policy as of September 1999) to ensure trails are maintained through new plantations.

2. Request agencies, tenure holders and public to provide input and assist in management of existing and new recreational sites and trails.

→ This activity can be split into three sub-activities:

2.1 Request agencies, tenure holders and public to provide input in management of existing recreational sites and trails.

- This activity was fulfilled upon implementation of a public referral process for the Bulkley RAMP (approved as DM Policy in July 1997).

2.2 Request agencies, tenure holders and public to provide input in management of new recreational sites and trails

- MOF District will fulfill this activity by implementing a public referral process following completion of the Bulkley Strategic Recreation Study.

2.3 Request agencies, tenure holders and public to assist in management of new recreational sites and trails

MOF District is currently fulfilling (and will continue to fulfill) this activity by:

- setting up agreements with recreation interest groups for management of trails and cabins;
- directing major licensees through LUP strategies to assist in managing existing trails (e.g. through trail bed maintenance/marking strategies, and deactivation strategies that ensure access is maintained to trailheads), and those trails made known through future LUP amendments.

3. Identify lakes for Landscape Unit plans that should remain in semi-primitive or primitive settings.

- The "Lakes Management" section of the Bulkley Strategic Recreation Study (in progress) contains an assessment of lakes with known recreational values. It proposes that about a third of assessed lakes will be maintained in "Backcountry" class (defined as 'no trail and greater than 200 metres from a road) and "Wilderness" class (no trail and greater than 1 km from a road). Lakes in these classes correspond well to lakes in "primitive or semi-primitive settings".
- Following its completion, the Recreation Study will be discussed and taken through a public process to finalize strategies, including lake access strategies. These strategies will be added to Landscape Unit Plans and established as DM Policy in a future amendment [target date is ~October 2001].

4. Plan and monitor development to be sensitive to Babine Lake water quality, recreational potential and the high archaeological potential of the lakeshore.

- MOF District's understanding is that Babine Lake's recreation potential is best served by managing lake viewscapes sensitively. The Babine lakeshore foreground viewscape has been assigned a retention visual quality objective (VQO) in the Torkelson LUP (i.e. forest management activities may be discernible but not clearly visible to the average viewer). Background viewscapes as seen from Babine Lake have been assigned a partial retention VQO (forest management activities may be noticeable but must blend well with the natural appearance of the landscape). Strategies for managing to these VQO's are DM Policy as of September 1999.

- Regarding Babine Lake water quality – future forest development within Babine Lake viewscapes is subject to VQO management plus riparian management legislation from the Forest Practices Code of BC Act, so is sensitive to Babine Lake water quality. A potential gap in management is in water quality monitoring of major streams flowing into Babine Lake, that transport impurities from sources not associated with the Babine Lake viewscapes. [MOF District will investigate this gap in 2001].
- Development planning in areas with archaeological potential on Babine Lake lakeshore is influenced by the Bulkley/Cassiar Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Resource Inventory (CHARI - approved as DM Policy in November 2000), and the Culturally Modified Tree Policy (CMT Policy - approved as DM Policy in May 1999).
- The CHARI identifies a band of 300 metres around the Babine Lake lakeshore as having high archaeological potential, and a further band extending 200-1000 metres as having moderate potential. In areas with high archaeological potential, the CHARI requires the forest licensee to hire a specialist (e.g. an archaeologist) to prepare an Archaeological Impact Assessment (AIA) prescribing management measures for any cultural heritage or archaeological features present, in conjunction with affected First Nations. The AIA must be submitted to the DM prior to approval of development.

In areas with moderate archaeological potential - the CHARI requires licensees to have a trained individual assess cultural heritage resources and develop management measures in conjunction with affected First Nations, in the following situations:

- where a significant cultural heritage resource (e.g. trail, village site, campsite, etc.) is known to be present;
- where First Nations have raised concerns with respect to impacts on traditional use features within the area proposed for development.

Under the CMT Policy, if any previously unidentified archaeological resource feature is located during forest operations, it must be reported immediately to the district manager and work suspended until appropriate mitigative measures are developed.

5. Recognize and protect hiking trails into the Babine Mountains.

- Recreation trails into the Babine Mountains are recognized in the Reiseter and Chapman LUP's. LUP strategies (DM Policy as of September 1999) provide management measures in case of disturbance by harvest. This task is also recognized in the Access and Subsurface projects.

6. Prepare plan to address existing and potential activities among recreational users in the Blunt Mountain area .

- Recreational issues for this contentious area were discussed during the Bulkley RAMP process, but left unresolved. The Bulkley Strategic Recreation Study (in progress) includes MOF vision for potential resolution of user conflicts in the Blunt and other areas. This vision will be brought forward for public input through a future planning process.

7. Agencies will provide management to address recreational user conflicts in the Bulkley Valley Planning Unit, including those on the Bulkley River.

- The Bulkley RAMP (approved as DM Policy in July 1997) addressed recreational user conflicts of the day (e.g. designation of Malkow Lookout access as non-motorized). Management of future conflicts will be coordinated or facilitated by MOF District, as the need arises.
- Recreational user conflicts on the Bulkley River are addressed by the Bulkley River Angling Use Plan, which has been partially implemented. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries are undertaking a comprehensive review of the Angling Guide Management System and Classified Waters, with a preliminary discussion paper expected in early 2001.

8. Prevent development of facilities or motor vehicle operation on the prairie west of the existing Hudson Bay Mountain ski boundary.

- No new facilities are being developed in this area.
- MOF District is aware of occasional motor vehicle operation on the prairie west of the ski boundary, despite the winter/summer non-motorized designation established by the Bulkley RAMP and the presence of a sign on the Prairie T-bar outbuilding.
- The DM's approval letter to the Bulkley RAMP dated July 25, 1997, commits MOF District staff to conducting periodic spot checks on designated and posted non-motorized areas.

- Under section 26 of the Forest Practices Code of BC Act Forest Recreation Regulation, a forest official can issue violation tickets of $115 for various offences including unauthorized entry. Penalties increase for repeat offenders to a maximum of $100,000 and/or 1 year in prison.

9. ***Maintain opportunities for high recreational use in the Sinclair Creek Planning Unit, especially with access from the Microwave Road.***

- Strategies to ensure recreational access and trails are maintained in case of harvest are established (DM Policy as September 1999) in the Telkwa LUP. The Microwave Road has a winter and summer motorized access designation in the Bulkley RAMP (DM Policy as of July 1997).

10. ***Review guide outfitting and angling potential in the Deep Creek Planning Unit and co-ordinate reviews of future backcountry recreation activities. (BCE)***

- There are no current plans to alter existing guiding territory boundaries or activities in this area.

Exhibit 18: Bulkley LRMP Status – Project J: Visual

Project J: Visual (MOF)

Project Status: Substantially complete

Objective: Objectives to manage the scenic resources will be identified in the landscape unit plans, with special attention given to major corridors, recreation focus points, and specific viewpoints.

Status of Tasks

1. ***Utilize partial cutting and creative block design to meet visual quality objectives.***

- Visual Quality objectives and strategies were established for 12 Landscape Units in Bulkley TSA, all except Bulkley Landscape Unit (DM Policy as of September 1999). Partial cutting and creative block designs are identified as strategies to achieve visual quality objectives.

2. ***Pay special attention to sensitive viewscapes as seen from: Babine Lake, Nilkitkwa F.S. Rd. and recreational lakes and roads.***

- Visual Quality objectives and strategies for viewscapes as seen from these viewpoints are established in the Babine and Nilkitwa Landscape Unit Plans (LUP's).

3. ***Development plans to pay special attention to views from Suskwa community and Touhy Lake.***

- Visual quality objectives and strategies for viewscapes as seen from Suskwa community are established in the Harold Price LUP. They are not as yet established for viewscapes from Touhy Lake, but will be through an upcoming amendment to the Harold Price LUP (~October 2001).

4. ***Apply visual quality constraints identified in review and approval processes for industrial development in Big Onion Mountain Special Management Zone.***

- Visual quality objectives for timber harvesting are established for the Chapman and Reiseter LUPs. These objectives will be applied where applicable to mine development. Visual quality objectives that are designed for timber harvesting have only limited application to mine development. Areas to be harvested for pits, dumps and tailings ponds are determined by the location and size of the ore deposit and the topography of the site. Visual quality objectives may be applicable to access roads and millsites.

5. ***Identify visual quality constraints for the Ganokwa Creek sub-unit of the Babine Mountains.***

- Visual quality objectives and strategies are established for the Reiseter LUP.

6. ***Development plans will pay special attention to the views from Hy. 16 and from the Babine Mountains Park.***

- Visual quality objectives and strategies for viewscapes as seen from these viewpoints are established for the Reiseter LUP.

7. ***Development plans will include prescriptions that pay special attention to the views from Kitseguecla and Jack Mould Lakes.***

- Visual quality objectives and strategies for viewscapes as seen from these viewpoints are established for the Trout Creek/Kitseguecla LUP.

8. Address high visual quality concerns in Development Plan reviews in the Glacier Gulch sub-unit of Hudson Bay Mountain.

- Bulkley Valley LUP not completed at this time. Visual Quality objectives will be included. Viewscapes within the Glacier Gulch subunit are currently and informally being managed as 'Preservation' visual quality objective (i.e. only minimal alterations that enhance natural wildland are permitted).

9. Manage timber with low impact methods (single tree/group selection) to maintain visual quality and forest health in the Ski Smithers SM2 zone.

- Bulkley Valley LUP is not completed at this time. Visual Quality strategies will be included.

10. Develop Visual Quality Objectives for Copper River viewscapes.

- Copper LUP identifies visual quality objectives for Copper River viewscapes.

11. Identify Visual Quality objectives for corridor of McDonnel F.S. Rd.

- Visual quality objectives for the McDonnell road corridor are identified in the Copper LUP.

12. Develop visual quality objectives for viewscapes as seen from Seven Sisters and the Copper River corridor.

- Visual Quality objectives for the Copper River are identified in the Copper LUP. As mentioned previously, Visual Quality objectives are still to be developed for viewscapes as seen from the Seven Sisters.

5.4.2 Visual Landscape Management

Visual landscape inventories have been completed for heavily use travel corridors, for many recreation lakes and rivers and for other important scenic areas. Some of the more remote scenic lakes have not had visual landscape inventories completed. Although approved visual quality objectives have not been established, the inventories are being used in forest development plans. Directions in the LRMP regarding sensitive visual areas are being incorporated in Landscape Unit Plans and Forest Development Plans. It is widely recognized that visual landscape management is likely to become more important in the future.

5.4.3 Bulkley Recreation Access Management Plan

In July of 1997 the Bulkley Plan Area and a group of recreational users produced a Recreation Access Management Plan (RAMP) for the Bulkley Planning area. This plan identified areas for motorized and non-motorized recreation use in both winter and summer in the Bulkley area. Because this was a consensus-based process and user groups were unable to agree on many areas, use allocation was not made on many areas. Recent anecdotal reports indicate users groups may be prepared to re-enter discussions on further use allocations.

5.4.4 Caribou Recovery Plan

In 1997, the Ministry of Environment introduced a Caribou Recovery Plan for the Telkwa Ranges. This plan called for a voluntary restriction of recreation use in order to allow a transplanted herd of caribou the greatest possible chance to re-establish in the ranges. Areas were identified for both summer and winter motorized and non-motorized uses. A CORE recovery area was established which excludes all uses except for a two month summer period when non-motorized use is allowed.

Recreationists' have not completely accepted these voluntary restrictions. The Ministry of Environment has established a public working group and is continuing to work towards agreement on the need for these restrictions with recreation users, however MOE states in a recent public communication that if voluntary restrictions are not followed, stronger measures such as legislated restrictions may be pursued to ensure protection of the caribou.

5.4.5 Strategic Recreation Plan

In 1999, at the direction of the LRMP, the Bulkley/Cassiar Forest District began a strategic review of outdoor recreation activity on crown lands in the Bulkley Planning area. The purpose of the review is to inventory lakes, trails and other recreation opportunities in order to provide operational direction to Landscape Unit Plans. The study will not be going to the public. It was not meant for that. Any LUP direction that results will go to the public for review and comment.

5.4.6 Commercial Backcountry Recreation

BC Assets and Lands continues to encourage applicants with an interest in developing commercial recreation ventures to put forward proposals. In the Bulkley Valley an application for commercial snowmobile tours is currently in the review process. The operators of the Hudson Bay Mountain ski hill are also investigating the possibility of expanding their land base and size of operation.

5.4.7 Provincial Parks

Management Direction Statements (MDS) have been produced for nearly all the protected areas established as a result of the LRMP process. The Seven Sisters Provincial Park (which borders on the Bulkley area) is expected to have an approved MDS by the fall of 2001. These direction statements provide interim management direction until management plans can be prepared. They state what kinds of recreation/tourism activities are appropriate for each area, for instance whether or not motorized use may occur, where aircraft may land.

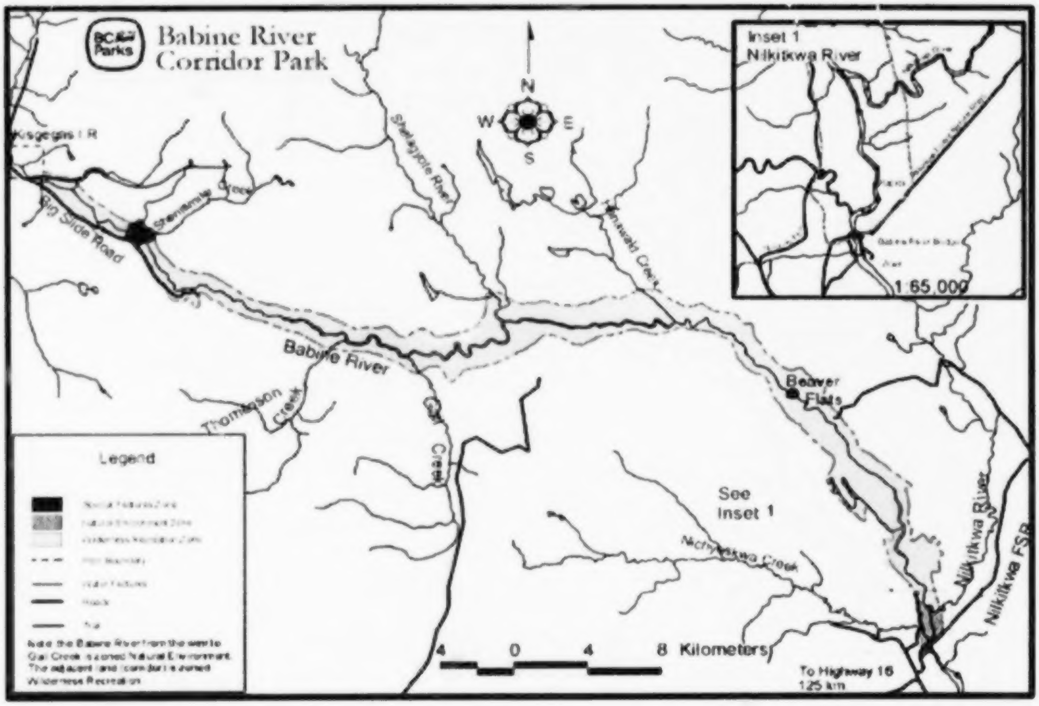
5.4.8 Babine River Corridor Provincial Park

The Babine River Corridor Park was established in 1999 following the recommendations of both the Kispiox and Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plans (LRMPs).

A Management Direction Statement for Babine River Corridor Park was approved in June 2000. This management direction statement was prepared in consultation with user groups and was vetted in a public open house attended by over 100 interested individuals

A recently completed study by Hillcrest Recreation Consulting Inc. et al examines capacity for recreation use on the Babine River. According to river users who participated in the study, recreation use on the river is near or at capacity. Consequently BC Parks is not likely to entertain any proposal which would significantly increase recreation use – particularly during the peak August/September season.

Exhibit 19: Babine River Corridor Park


BC Parks
Babine River Corridor Park
N
W
E
S
Kisgegas I.R
Shelagyote River
Big Slide Road
Babine River
Thomlinson Creek
Gail Creek
Beaver Flats
See Inset 1
Nichyeskwa Creek
Nilkitkwa River
Nilkitkwa FSR
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Nilkitkwa River
1:65,000
4 0 4 8 Kilometers
To Highway 16 125 km
Legend
Special Features Zone
Natural Environment Zone
Wilderness Recreation Zone
Park Boundary
Water Features
Roads
Trail
Note: the Babine River from the weir to Gail Creek is zoned Natural Environment. The adjacent land corridor is zoned Wilderness Recreation.

Chapter 6

6 Tourism Resources of the Bulkley Plan Area

6.1 Study Area and Features

The Bulkley Plan Area is well suited for outdoor activities. The presence of rolling alpine, open meadows and dry and plentiful snowfall all benefit the winter opportunities for ski touring and snowmobiling. Summer based activities are enhanced by the presence of readily accessible alpine and subalpine, jagged, rugged as well as rolling ridges, lakes and rivers. Wildlife and sports fish compliment the features.

It is an abundant land and humans have presided here for over 10,000 years. Over the course of time, a rich culture full of art, stories, knowledge and trade flourished. Wars were fought and alliances made. The presence of the First Nations can still be felt and seen among the people who reside here. Over time, the land attracted people from distant countries. The historical presence can be seen in a number of structures. Unfortunately, these structures were made of wood and over time a number have been reclaimed by the land. Today there are more recent totems and structures as well as remaining vestiges. The visitor is left to imagine human settlement and activity in this land.

6.2 Resource Area Description

In the Bulkley Plan Area, the feature and landscape accessibility and geographical relationships provides a guide for division into resource areas or units. Three units were identified: the ***Western*** Unit, the ***Bulkley and Adjoining Ranges*** Unit and the ***Northeast*** Unit. They are discussed in the following table (Exhibit 20).

Immediately following this table, is a map showing the existing tourism facilities in the study area (Exhibit 21).

Exhibit 20: Unit Descriptions – Bulkley TOS

UNITS	FOCUS	DESCRIPTIONS
WESTERN The Western Unit provides mid to back country recreation opportunities. It is signified by: Dramatic Ranges with extensive alpine, subalpine and icefields. Lakes Creeks	**ASHMAN RANGE**	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, cirque basins, extensive snow and ice. Rolling terrain. **Outstanding Features:** Kitsun/Mulwain alpine area. Peaks, alpine/sub-alpine. **Associated Products and activities:** Mountaineering, Hiking, Ski mountaineering. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Ashman ridge is designated non-motorized under the RAMP
	MOUNT SIR ROBERT RANGE	**General Description:** Jagged peaks with sharp ridges and sections of rolling subalpine. Glacier. **Outstanding Features:** Peaks, glacier. **Associated Products and activities:** Mountaineering, Hiking, Ski tour. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** This area has been suggested as one with potential for a ski touring hut based on fly in access. The Bulkley Strategic recreation study has suggested the upper Mulwain and Red Canyon valleys and associated alpine areas could be designated as a non-motorized area.
	CARIBOU / SINCLAIR RANGE	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, cirque basins, alpine, subalpine, glacier. Rolling alpine extends from the Caribou Range to the Sinclair Plateau. Contains extensive alpine meadows, small lakes and ponds similar to the Microwave area. **Outstanding Features:** Sinclair plateau and Caribou Range. **Associated Products and activities:** Mountaineering, Hiking, Ski touring (Caribou), Snowmobiling (Sinclair Plateau). **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** No summer trail access exists at the present time, although a few people are bushwhacking into the area from nearby logging roads
	HOWSONS RANGE	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with extensive ridges with rolling alpine and sub-alpine, jagged peaks, steep slopes (limited to valleys), glacier. Established trail. **Outstanding Features:** Polymer Lake trail, Peaks **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Mountaineering (summer and winter ski). **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:**
	SOUTH TELKWA RANGE	**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine. Small lakes. Gravel roads lead to established trails that extend to the sub-alpine. **Outstanding Features:** Established trail, Cabin (Starr Creek), Rolling alpine, extensive network of old mineral exploration trails throughout the range. Goat and Mountain Caribou (isolated population with very limited numbers). **Associated Products and activities:** Ski touring, Hiking, Mountain biking, Horseback access to Mooseskin Johnny Lake, Hut to hut opportunity linked to North Telkwa, Nature observation.. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Most of the range is zone non-motorized under the Caribou recovery program (Voluntary at present)
	ZYMOETZ RIVER/ MULWAIN RED	**General Description:** The Zymoetz River starts at a series of lakes (Aldrich, Dennis, McDonnel) just east of the Hudson Bay Range and ends at the Skeena River east of Terrace. Within the Study Area the river contains the class 3 action of the river below the lakes and the placid waters of the small lakes to the northeast. In the Kalum Forest District the river turns into the "Copper" and includes the Copper Canyon with class 4 and 5 whitewater. Moderate wildlife values. **Outstanding Features:** Zymoetz (Copper) River, Class 1 classified water, provincially significant fisheries lakes, and established trails. **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Mountain biking, Boating, Canoeing, Kayaking, Ski touring (upper reaches of Red Canyon), snowmobiling, and river and lake angling. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Developments must consider spawning values and water clarity

UNITS	FOCUS	DESCRIPTIONS
BULKLEY VALLEY AND ADJOINING RANGES The Bulkley Valley & adjoining Ranges provide front to mid country recreation opportunities. Signified by rural communities, rolling ridges with extensive alpine and small glaciers. Small lakes and rivers	**BULKLEY VALLEY**	**General Description:** Wide u-shaped valley with extensive rural land. The Bulkley River is primarily slow moving but increases in flow and intensity as it reaches the Kispiox Forest District boundary. The Telkwa River has whitewater sections. A few small lakes dot the surface, including Tyhee, Round and Coffin. **Outstanding Features:** Bulkley River, Tyhee Lake. Moricetown Gorge. **Associated Products and activities:** Canoeing, Rafting, Kayaking, Drifting, Horseback riding, Mountain biking, Hiking, Fishing. Nature Observation. Cultural Heritage. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Private lands, relatively few public access points to the Bulkley River, Both the LRMP and the Bulkley Strategic recreation study recommend development of connecting trails between urban and forest areas as well as inter- urban connections (i.e.: a paved trail connecting Telkwa to Smithers).
	ROCHER DEBOULE RANGE	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, small glacier, many cirque basins, several with small lakes. **Outstanding Features:** Most notable features are in the Kispiox Forest District including Blue Lake and historic mining. Climbing rock. **Associated Products and activities:** Mountaineering (demanding, poor ski mountaineering), Hiking, Rock climbing, Snowmobiling (Boulder Creek Road), Mountain biking. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** LRMP rates the range as important for goat populations
	NORTH TELKWA RANGE	**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine. Small glacier and lakes. Logging roads lead to trails and hiking opportunities. West of range lies the Mooseskin Johnny Lakes. High wildlife values (caribou). **Outstanding Features:** Sub-alpine ridges and plateaus, extensive evidence of historical mining activity, great views of the Bulkley Valley from Houston to Moricetown. **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Ski touring, Mountain biking. Snowmobiling **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Caribou range, the most attractive recreation areas currently exclude all users in the winter and motorized use in the summer. Hiking is only suggested for July and August (based on voluntary compliance with Caribou Recovery Plan)
	SANDSTONE / LOUISE	**General Description:** The lakes within the polygon include Sandstone, Sandstone/Louis, Hankin and Jack Mould Lakes. Moderate wildlife values. **Outstanding Features:** The lakes are located within a valley containing open meadows. Generally wet terrain limits summer opportunities. **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Mountain biking, Canoeing, Ski touring, snowmobiling, and river and lake angling. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Developments must consider spawning values and water clarity.
	BLUNT SEATON RANGE	**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine also many rugged cirque talus basins, sharp ridges and gendarmes. Trails with hiking and skiing opportunities. **Outstanding Features:** Mount Seaton and Blunt Mountain. Rock. Two trails access the alpine. **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Ski touring, Rock climbing, Snowmobiling, Hut system to Babine Range. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Currently an area of conflict between snowmobilers and ski tourers

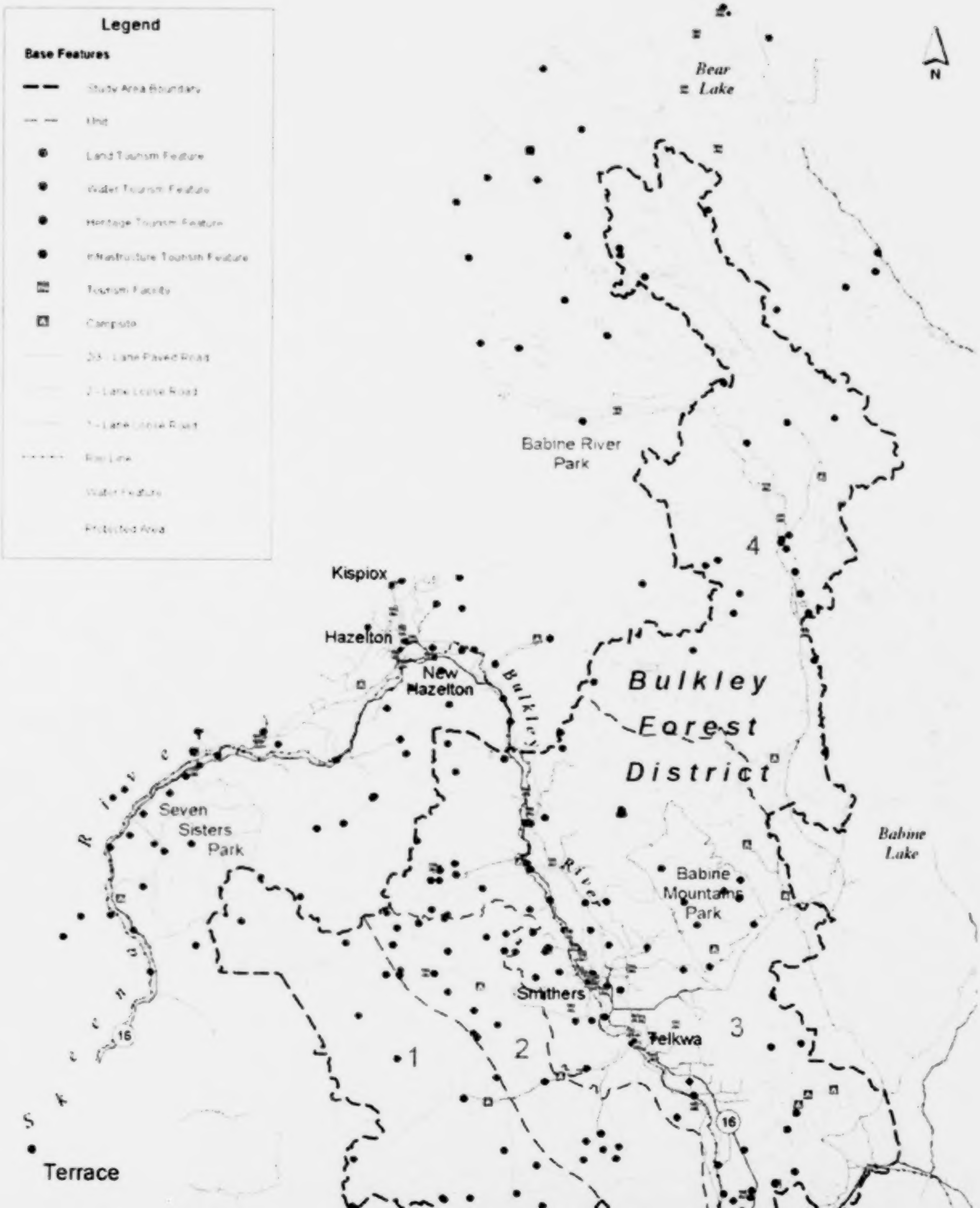
UNITS	FOCUS	DESCRIPTIONS
	BABINE RANGE AND DOME MOUNTAIN.	**General Description:** Gravel roads lead to established trails that extend rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine. Small glacier and lakes. Deep valleys. **Outstanding Features:** Established trails. Babine Range to Astlais Mountain. Historical mining activity evident, new BC Parks cabin in Silverking Basin. One of the most popular local snowmobile areas. Horse use at Reiseter extension, **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Ski touring, Snowmobiling, Mountain biking. Horse use. Hut system and Cultural heritage interpretation. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Park, Reiseter extension has a commercial horse use. Big Onion (Astlais) and Dome Mountains and other particular areas allow snowmobile use with the other areas excluding all motorized uses. Hut system to Seaton Blunt range
	HAROLD PRICE / BLUNT BASIN	**General Description:** Steep ridges (Blunt Basin) with sub-alpine and alpine bowls and extensive meadows (Harold Price). Established trail extends to the area. **Outstanding Features:** Established trails (Moricetown/Cronin Trail). Meadows and bowl. **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Ski touring, Snowmobiling, Horse use, Mountain biking, Hut system. Cultural Heritage Interpretation. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Restrictions apply to snowmobile use. Hut System between to Seaton Blunt and Babine ranges.
	MCQUARRY LAKE S	**General Description:** Small lakes and creeks in deep forested valleys, small rounded peaks. **Outstanding Features:** McQuarry, Farewell, Hidden, Helen, Byman Lakes, mineral exploration activity on Grouse Mountain. **Associated Products and activities:** Fishing, Hiking, Ski touring, **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Although a road provides access to the summit of Grouse Mountain it is not open to the public. Trail access to the lakes is mainly from the Houston end
	HUDSON BAY RANGES	**General Description:** Lakes and creeks, dramatic peak and glaciers, cirque basins. **Outstanding Features:** McDonnel and Silvern lakes, Crater Lake, extensive hiking trails to lakes, peak, glacier, extensive mountain biking trail network, extensive flower meadows, downhill and cross-country ski facilities **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Ski (touring, nordic and downhill), Mountaineering, Mountain biking **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Currently very high use and very popular with local residents
	MICROWAVE PLATEAU	**General Description:** Many small lakes, ponds, creeks, extensive flower meadows on a subalpine plateau **Outstanding features:** road accessible alpine/subalpine meadows, extensive road network in the alpine **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Ski touring, Snowmobiling, Mountain biking **Planning considerations:** Currently high use and very popular with local residents
NORTHEAST The Northeast Unit provides front to back country recreation	**NETAZUL RANGE**	**General Description**: Short range with glacier. Sharp ridges with some rolling alpine. **Outstanding Features**: Wide expanses of alpine meadow/subalpine forest on either side of ridge, extensive wetlands east of the ridge. High mountain goat population **Associated Products and activities**: Ski touring, Hiking, Nature Observation. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints**: LRMP notes concern for goat populations in this area
	THOEN FRENCH RANGE	**General Description:** This section has extensive rounded ridges with rolling sub-alpine and alpine. **Outstanding Features:** Rolling alpine, historical mineral exploration activity **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Ski touring, Snowmobiling **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** Area is rated as important for Grizzly in the Bulkley LRMP

UNITS	FOCUS	DESCRIPTIONS
opportunities. It is signified by: Rural communities Rolling ridges with jagged peaks. Extensive alpine. Lakes, including Babine Lake (west shore). Rivers, including the Babine River (to Kispiox Forest District)	**BABINE LAKE/RIVER**	**General Description:** Includes the western shores of the northwest arm of Babine Lake, the community of Fort Babine, Nilkitkwa Lake and the Babine River. The Babine River is renowned as a wilderness river with high wildlife values, a world-class steelhead fishery and a regionally important sockeye fishery. Regionally important Grizzly Bear population with high probability of sightings along the river. Rainbow Alley (between Bulkley and Nilkitkwa Lakes) has very significant sports fish values. **Outstanding Features:** Babine Lake, Nilkitkwa Lake, Babine River **Associated Products and activities:** Motorized boating, Canoeing, Rafting, Nature observation, Fishing. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** The Babine River corridor was established to protect wildlife and recreation values by the LRMP process. The section of the river (downriver from Nilkitkwa Lake) has been turned into a Provincial Park. According to a recent study commissioned by BC Parks, the Babine River is close to or exceeding recreation carrying capacity. A high percentage of this area has operable forest.
	NILKITWA RIVER	**General Description:** The Nilkitkwa River watershed extends into the Sicintine Range. Numerous small lakes and marshes. Extensive open terrain and forest. **Outstanding Features:** Extensive old burns **Associated Products and activities:** Rafting, canoeing, nature observation. **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** This watershed is currently the focus of a large portion of the logging activity in the Bulkley TSA
	SICINTINE RANGE	**General Description:** Remote dramatic landscape with extensive ridges with rolling alpine and sub-alpine, jagged peaks, steep slopes (limited to valleys), glacier. **Outstanding Features:** Rolling alpine with dramatic features. Shelagyote Peak. Extensive glacial features including morraines, outwash plains and braided streams, many small lakes & wetlands. **Associated Products and activities:** Ski mountaineering (easy to get around). **Planning Considerations and Recommended Constraints:** The portion of these ranges in both the Kispiox and Bulkley districts are both in special management zones, which include no logging prescriptions.
	BAIT RANGES	**General Description:** Remote range, southern half Sawtooth ranges, glaciers to the east side of range, northern half rocky ridges, cirque basins and small lakes **Outstanding features:** remote wilderness mountains, high chances of solitude **Associated Products and activities:** Hiking, Mountaineering, Snowmobiling Planning considerations: Forestry development will make the southern part of these ranges more accessible in the near future.

Bulkley Tourism Opportunity Study

Tourism Features and Facilities

British Columbia


Legend
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Study Area Boundary
Unit
Land Tourism Feature
Water Tourism Feature
Heritage Tourism Feature
Infrastructure Tourism Feature
Tourism Facility
Campsite
2/3 - Lane Paved Road
2 - Lane Loose Road
1 - Lane Loose Road
Rail Line
Water Feature
Protected Area
N
Bear Lake
Babine River Park
4
Kispiox
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Bulkley Forest District
Skeena River
Seven Sisters Park
Babine Lake
Babine Mountains Park
River
Smithers
Telkwa
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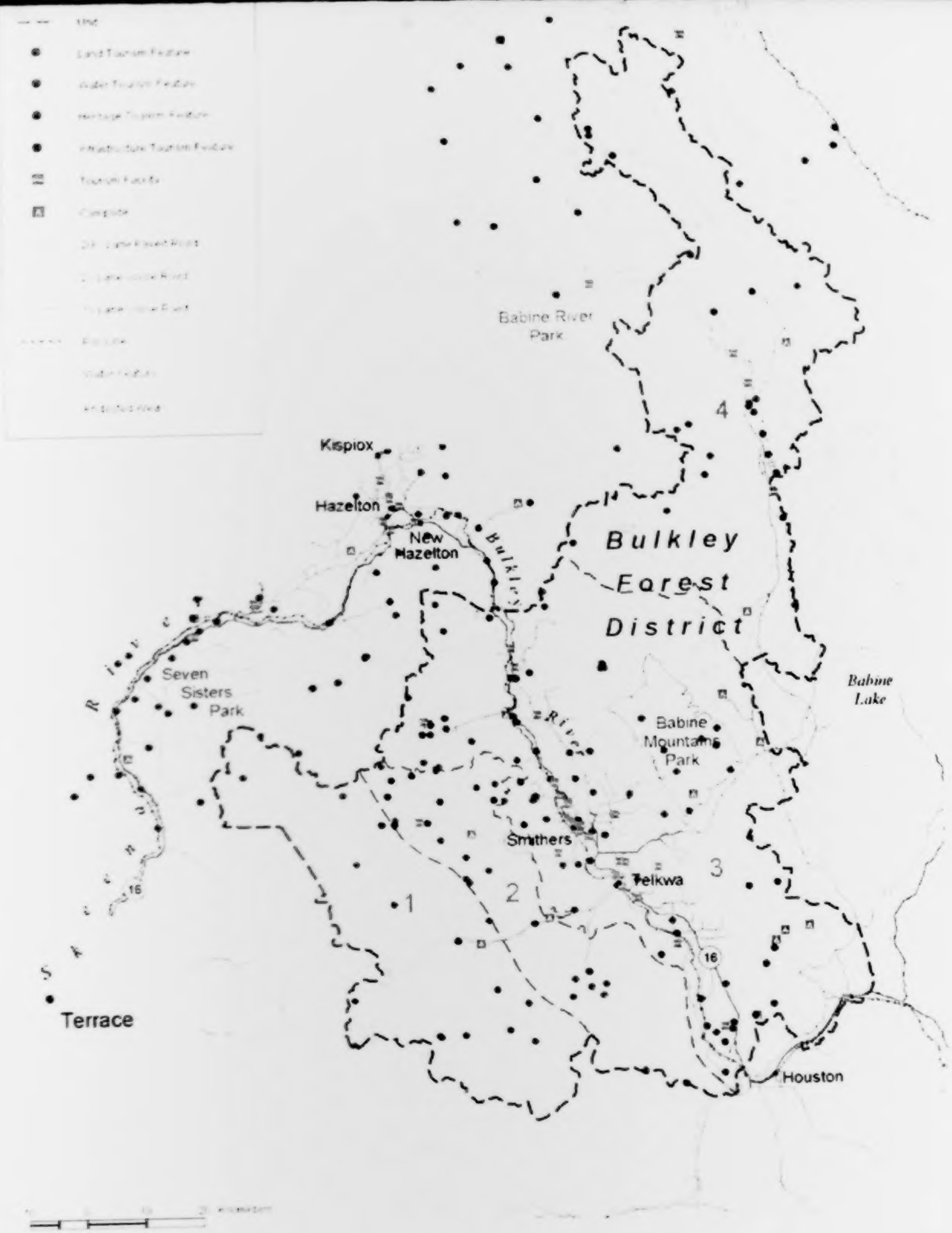
16
16
Terrace


Unit
Land Tourism Feature
Water Tourism Feature
Heritage Tourism Feature
Infrastructure Tourism Feature
Tourism Facility
Campsite
2+ Lane Paved Road
2 Lane Loose Road
1 Lane Loose Road
Pipeline
Water Feature
Protected Area
Babine River Park
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Kispiox
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Bulkley River
Bulkley Forest District
Skeena River
Seven Sisters Park
Babine Lake
Babine Mountains Park
Smithers
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88-90

6.3 Product Selection

The Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture identified over 50 potential tourism activities, which were evaluated by the consulting team to determine which offer the greatest potential for **outdoor recreation-based tourism** development in the Bulkley Plan Area. A short-list was generated based on the consultants' knowledge of the resource base, market trends and economic factors of the study area, priorities defined by the funding agencies, and experience conducting similar studies in other parts of B.C.

The list of relevant tourism activities was presented in the initial meeting of the LAC. The team members were tasked with identifying which represented, in their opinion, the most potential for opportunity development. When the final results were tallied, a general consensus was reached regarding which tourism activities merit further research. Those chosen were grouped or singled out into a tourism product. Each tourism product may represent a number of activities that have a common relationship.

The tourism products evaluated are:

- Mountain Biking
- Mountaineering
- Summer Trail Products
- Nature Observation/Heritage Interpretation
- Nordic Skiing/Ski Touring
- Fresh Water Activity: Non-motorized and Motorized
- Air Tour and Access
- Snowmobiling
- Destination Lodge / Hut system

These final products can be regarded as the best short-term options for outdoor recreation-based tourism products. However none exist in isolation, and opportunities to build on clusters of tourism products or where products could be linked are extremely important and are described in this report.

The "top products" should not be considered an all-inclusive list as there are likely other tourism products or activities not evaluated in this study, which have enormous short or longer term potential. For example, as the primary focus for tourism development in this study is outdoor recreation products, an activity such as a festival or cultural event, which may have high potential in the short term, was not evaluated.

Each of the selected tourism products was also evaluated to determine the land's suitability to support the product. The result of this analysis is entered into the discussion in the following chapter and in the suitability maps.

The criteria guide for each of the chosen product is identified in the following table (Exhibit 22).

Exhibit 22: Product Descriptions

Line	Product Delivery	Complementary Product Lines	DESIRABLE RESOURCES	Product Enhancement	Development Considerations *	Comments
WATER						
Freshwater: Non-motorized Kayaking Canoeing Rafting Tubing (camping)	▪ Linear ▪ Circle ▪ Shuttle ▪ Single/Multi day ▪ Guided /Unguided ▪ Instructional	▪ Cultural Heritage ▪ Nature Observation ▪ Lodge ▪ Marine Cruising ▪ Water: Activities ▪ Scenic viewing ▪ Enthusiast - water	▪ River and/or lakes ▪ Range of whitewater class suitable to skill/activities ▪ "Play" areas , Scenic areas, Reliable fauna sightings, Wilderness areas, Fish ▪ Complimentary trails to views/features. Camping locations and infrastructure	▪ Put in/pull out sites ▪ Trails along difficult stretches ▪ Non-motorized zoning ▪ Viewscape management ▪ Interpretive information ▪ Guide books/services ▪ Shuttle services ▪ Watercraft rentals ▪ Safety provisions	▪ River classification ▪ Environmental Impacts ▪ Heritage Impacts ▪ Impacts on wildlife ▪ Safety Issues	▪ Complementary Businesses: Shuttle services (Van, Float Plane), Watercraft rentals, River Guide services, Interpretive Guide services, Hospitality industry
Freshwater: Motorized Motor boating Jet boating	▪ Circle ▪ Linear ▪ Localized ▪ Guided / Unguided	▪ Cultural Heritage ▪ Nature Observation ▪ Lodge, Touring ▪ Water: Activities ▪ Scenic viewing	▪ Rivers and/or lakes, Scenic areas, Reliable fauna sightings, Roads suitable for boat trailers, Fish	▪ Put in/pull out sites, Supportive management planning, Viewscape management, Support businesses (fuel, repair equipment sales, rental,)	▪ Negative social impacts ▪ Environmental Impacts ▪ Heritage Impacts ▪ Use conflicts	▪ Complementary businesses: Equipment sales rental & repair, Fueling Services.
LAND - SUMMER						
Mountaineering Ski mountaineering Mountaineering Rock climbing Ice climbing	▪ Single/Multi day ▪ Linear, Shuttle ▪ Circle ▪ Guided/Unguided ▪ Instructional	▪ Enthusiast ▪ Hut System ▪ Scenic Viewing ▪ Nature Observation	▪ Solid rock, climbing ice, cliffs, escarpments, Boulders, canyons, Glaciers, ice fields, remote, rugged alpine ridges, Peaks, suitable rock types. ▪ Camp sites/Potable water	▪ Access ▪ Infrastructure development (hut system). ▪ Shuttle services	▪ Safety Issues ▪ Avalanche Conditions Impact on the setting ▪ Environmental Impacts	▪ Complementary businesses: Mountain guide, Hiking guide, Shuttle services, Equipment rental, guidebook production
Hiking, Animal Assisted Hiking Backpacking Horse/Llama Transportation (camping)	▪ Single/Multi day ▪ Circle ▪ Linear ▪ Shuttle ▪ Guided /Unguided ▪ Instructional	▪ Hut System, Lodges ▪ Nature Observation ▪ Cultural Heritage ▪ Scenic viewing	▪ Trails (Length, condition, level of difficulty), Feature clusters (Lakes, ponds, streams, flower meadows, glaciers, accessible peaks), Reliable fauna sightings ▪ Historic/cultural features, Scenic areas. Non-motorized areas, Camp sites, Potable water, Proximity to population	▪ Loop trails development ▪ Trail maintenance ▪ Access road improvement ▪ Viewscape management ▪ Shuttle services ▪ Primitive and Semi-primitive ROS	▪ Environmental Impacts ▪ Tenures ▪ Heritage Impacts ▪ Use conflict (motorized)	▪ Complementary Businesses: Hiking guides, Guidebook production, Shuttle services, Photography courses, Equipment sales and rental, lodges

Product Line	Product Delivery	Complementary Product Lines	DESIRABLE RESOURCES	Product Enhancement	Development Considerations *	Comments
Mountain biking Classic Downhill Long Distance	▪ Single/Multi day ▪ Circle, Shuttle ▪ Guided /Unguided	▪ Hut System ▪ Lodges, Air ▪ Scenic viewing	▪ Trails (Specific desirable trail features) ▪ Feature clusters (see above)	▪ Trail / Infrastructure development ▪ Loop trails	▪ Environmental Impacts ▪ Use conflict	▪ Complementary Businesses: Bike rental and repair, Guided tours, Shuttle services, Guidebook production.
SNOW						
Motorized Snowmobiling	▪ Single/Multi day ▪ Circle ▪ Guided /Unguided	▪ Lodges ▪ Hut System ▪ Scenic viewing ▪ Guided tours	▪ Optimum snow conditions ▪ Access, Open "play" areas ▪ Variety cluster for various skill levels	▪ Groomed Access ▪ Motorized area designation ▪ Road clearing/parking	▪ Environmental Impacts ▪ Impacts on wildlife ▪ Tenures, Use Conflicts ▪ Avalanche conditions ▪ Negative social impacts	▪ Complementary businesses: Equipment sales, repair and rental, Guided tours, Trailer & rack construction, hospitality industry
Non-Motorized Ski touring X-country skiing	▪ Single/Multi day ▪ Shuttle, Linear, Circle. Instructional ▪ Guided /Unguided	▪ Lodges ▪ Hut System ▪ Air ▪ Scenic viewing	▪ Optimum snow conditions ▪ Access-short time to reach optimum area. Optimum areas - Trails and Open terrain. Variety of terrain for various skill levels	▪ Access ▪ Designated non-motorized area ▪ Road clearing/parking ▪ Loop trails, Groomed trails	▪ Environmental Impacts ▪ Impacts on wildlife ▪ Avalanche conditions	▪ Complementary businesses: Guided tours, equipment sales and rentals, guidebook production, lodges.

Product Line	Product Delivery	Complementary Product Lines	DESIRABLE RESOURCES	Product Enhancement	Development Considerations *	Comments
TRANSPORT						
Air (Helicopter/ Fixed Wing)	▪ Circle ▪ Shuttle ▪ Linkage ▪ Guided	▪ Heli-skiing ▪ Fishing, Hiking ▪ Backcountry skiing ▪ Biking, Touring Nature Observation ▪ Scenic Viewing ▪ Lodges	▪ Scenic areas, Rivers/Lakes, Open terrain, Trails, Optimum snow conditions ▪ Reliability of fauna sightings ▪ Loop tour opportunities	▪ Proximity of base camp to important features ▪ Linkage with other Tour types ▪ Viewscape management	▪ Impacts on wildlife Environmental Impacts ▪ Negative social impacts ▪ Tenure	▪ Suitable helicopter drop/off pickup is preferably less than a half hour. Complementary businesses: Production of guide media, Local tour guides, link to other tour types (road, water, rail). The helicopter product can compliment communities/lodges.
OBSERVATION						
Cultural Heritage	▪ Interpretive Centers ▪ Expositions ▪ Guided ▪ Single / Multi day ▪ Instructional	▪ Interpretation ▪ Guided tours ▪ Touring Products ▪ Lodges ▪ Nature Observation ▪ Scenic Viewing	▪ Visible heritage features ▪ Known heritage values	▪ Heritage Interpretation ▪ Heritage Exposition ▪ Infrastructure development ▪ Viewscape Management	▪ Sensitivity of information. ▪ Local capacity to do Interpretation	▪ First Nations (FN) and immigrant heritage can stand alone or compliment each other. FN and Immigrant heritage compliment and thus important to the other products. ▪ Complementary businesses: art and crafts, production of guide media, local tour guides, interpretive productions.
Nature Observation Grizzly viewing Bird watching Butterfly watching Wildlife watching Salmon runs Canopy walks	▪ Linear ▪ Circle ▪ Single/Multi-day ▪ Guided /Self-guided ▪ Canopy walks ▪ Instructional	▪ Tours ▪ Land ▪ Water ▪ Scenic Viewing Cultural Heritage	▪ Reliability of wildlife sightings ▪ Safe Viewing areas ▪ Scenic/Unique features ▪ Trails/ Platforms ▪ Proximity to good roads	▪ Interpretive media/guides ▪ Viewscape Management	▪ Wildlife management * ▪ Environmental Impacts ▪ Local capacity to do Interpretation ▪ Safety Issues	▪ Anchor species include bears, birds. Other flora and fauna provide an important compliment. ▪ Complementary businesses: production of guide media, souvenir items, local tour guides.

Product Line	Product Delivery	Complementary Product Lines	DESIRABLE RESOURCES	Product Enhancement	Development Considerations *	Comments
ACCOMODATION						
Lodge / Resort	▪ River, Land, ▪ Shoreline ▪ Feature ▪ Amenity (golf course)	▪ Activity focused: ▪ Retreat, Ranch, Spa, Cultural, Wilderness, Fish , Land- summer ▪ Land Winter, Air ▪ Scenic Viewing	▪ Focus- wildlife, culture, setting, sport fish ▪ Scenic/unique features ▪ Suitable location ▪ Opt. Snow conditions ▪ Trails	▪ Proximity to relevant features ▪ Scenic assurance	▪ Tenures ▪ Environmental Impacts ▪ Fish sustainability ▪ Suitable locations ▪ Social acceptability	▪ Lodge placement expands the base from which associated products can emerge.
Hut System	▪ Single or multi ▪ String or cluster ▪ Lake (shuttle) ▪ River (shuttle) ▪ Trail (linear or circle)	▪ Ski Touring, Fishing ▪ Animal Assisted ▪ Snowmobiling ▪ Boating (small) ▪ Cultural Heritage Nature Observe ▪ Scenic Viewing	▪ Scenic/unique features ▪ Suitable locations ▪ Focus- wildlife, culture, setting and sport fish. ▪ Ease of travel between huts	▪ Unobtrusive setting ▪ Critical mass development to allow for efficiency. ▪ Scenic assurance ▪ Non-motorized area	▪ Vandalism ▪ Tenures ▪ Social ▪ LAC /CC ▪ Avalanche conditions	▪ High to low end. Provides opportunity to move recreationists from environmentally /culturally sensitive sites. Complementary businesses: Shuttling, equipment sales and rentals, guidebook production

* DEVELOPMENT CONSIDERATIONS:

Wildlife Management: must address conflict with people, habituation of the animals to the people, and disturbance to the wildlife and their environs (this includes auditory impacts).

Heritage impacts: must address physical disturbance of heritage (archaeological) sites and artefacts.

Environmental impacts: must address the ecological impacts of an area that results from the kind of use, overuse, waste management, poor behaviour, timing of the activities and the distribution of the use. Refer to the guidelines on Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC).

Negative social impacts: Generally associated with the disturbance of the peace and tranquility of a recreation experience by an activity or participant behaviour.

Site Impacts: accounting for the carrying capacity (focused on the amount of use) and the Limits of Acceptable Change.

Alteration of Setting: the setting relates to the experience associated with an activity ranging from Primitive to Urban. The criteria are identified in the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS).

Safety Issues: Safety issues are dependent on the activity and are focused on the participant. Liability issues should be incorporated.

Use Conflicts: Use conflicts can be between motorized and non-motorized, mechanized and non-motorized.

6.4 Community and Tourism Product Matching

Throughout this section, identified opportunities are associated with the community situated in the optimum geographical location to benefit from development. These communities may or may not support development of that particular opportunity. Opportunities were identified and associated with communities without prejudice to treaty negotiations or First Nation's traditional territories. First Nation leaders have stated that they will not pursue opportunities outside of their traditional territory; they will defer to the Nation in whose territory the opportunity is positioned and will work towards cooperative management in areas that they share. The following set of tables' link tourism opportunities to the communities in the study area.

FORT BABINE	
Product	***Description***
Ski Touring	▪ In the Thoen French, the setting and relatively good access enhance the opportunities provided by the superb optimal snowfall and ideal topography. Potential for a heli-ski operation.
Summer Trail	▪ Focused on the rolling ridges of the Thoen French and the Fort Babine - Hazelton historical trail.
Nature Observation/ Cultural Heritage	▪ The history and traditional livelihood of the Natooten allows for tremendous interpretive opportunities. there are however, limited physical artefacts useable as tourism attractions. ▪ The is high reliability for the viewing of Grizzly and Black bear along the Babine River north of the Fishing weir. The Salmon run along the river is spectacular. There are mountain goat on the Natazul Mountains.
Whitewater Kayaking and Rafting	▪ The whitewater and the primitive setting of the Babine River is a well known for opportunity rafting and kayaking.
Flatwater (Drifting, Canoeing, Boating)	▪ Rainbow Alley, Nilkitkwa Lake and Babine Lake are well suited for flatwater activities.
Destination Lodge	▪ This area has lodge opportunities associated with the high fishing values of the Babine watershed, the ski touring and snowmobiling Thoen French mountain ranges.
Hut Systems	▪ Hut system can be linked to the Fort Babine to Hazelton Historical trail.

SMITHERS, MORICETOWN AND TELKWA	
Product	***Description***
Ski Touring	- A variety of settings, relatively good access and support from the community enhance the opportunities provided by the optimal snowfall and ideal topography in close proximity of the population centers. Conflict with snowmobile use is a consideration in areas outside Parks and designated zones.
Summer Trail	- Numerous trails, a variety of settings and the proximity of high value recreation features from these communities is a regional asset.
Whitewater Kayaking and Rafting	- The whitewater and the primitive setting of the Bulkley and Suskwa Rivers are well known opportunities for rafting and kayaking. The Telkwa River provides excellent kayaking. The play area adjacent to Tatlow Falls provides an opportunity with easy access.
Flatwater (Drifting, Canoeing, Boating)	- The Bulkley river provides tremendous flatwater and low riffle opportunities.
Air (Helicopter and Fixed Wing)	- A 60 km radius reaches scenic areas with a variety of topography from rugged peaks, steep terrain and glaciers. Wildlife is difficult to detect and the possibility for disturbance is high.
Nature Observation/ Cultural Heritage	- The presence of the First Nations in the study area allow for interpretive opportunities, however there are limited physical artefacts useable as tourism attractions and there is a concern by the First Nations of their disclosure to the public. - There may be some reliability for the viewing of Moose along the river valleys and scattered lakes and of mountain goat on the Rocher Deboule and Blunt mountain ranges.
Road Touring	- Road tour opportunities are associated with Highway 37.
Destination Lodge	- This area has lodge opportunities associated with the high fishing values of the Bulkley and Babine Rivers, the ski touring and snowmobiling potentials of the surrounding mountain ranges and there is an opportunity for a number of those lodges to diversify their operations to include other activities.
Hut Systems	- Hut systems are linked to the trails and the rivers.

Chapter 7

7 Tourism Opportunity Analysis

7.1 Air Tour and Access

7.1.1 Description

The Air Tour and Access Product is associated with scenic touring as well as providing access to and opportunities for mountain biking, paragliding, hiking, skiing and fishing. It utilizes the diversity of helicopters and the affordability of fixed wing aircraft. It compliments many tourism activity products. It has two components:

- An air tour allows tourists an opportunity to view surrounding landscapes while experiencing flying. The tours are best limited to an hour. Dramatic landscapes or diverse features are essential.
- The air access tour contains an air tour component but it is primarily to get recreationists to where they want to be. The turn around time from the base to the delivery area should be done within the shortest time possible. It is most suited for the helicopter. The access tour can deliver fishermen to the best fishing hole and, if need be, to instantly transfer them to another hole. This is an activity that is best managed by existing guides. Mountain bikers, hikers and ski tours can be delivered to the summit to enjoy the alpine/subalpine ridges and can be picked up or may return by trail. They may take a picnic lunch. Heli-skiing and paragliding activities require drop off at the summit of pristine snowfields, pickup at the base of the hill and then a drop off once again at the summit. The access tour is most profitable where the features are within a 15-minute flight of the base camp or airfield.

To determine the relationship of the features to the base camp or airfield the following criteria were identified:

- The staging areas are determined by it's ability to attract tourists, close linkage to industrial opportunities and the availability of required infrastructure.
- An air tour product should not take longer than one hour and at average speeds of up 150km per hour, a 60 km radius from the center is optimal for circle tours.
- The greatest and most profitable opportunities lie where the features are closest to the base camp or airfield.

7.1.2 Regional Overview

Strength	Scenic recreation features suitable for air tour. Suitable activity opportunities close to staging areas.
Weakness	Poor community support. Wildlife are incidental and air touring may disturb those in visible areas. Environmental concerns with activities utilizing air access to subalpine/alpine ridges. Concern for impact on rebuilding caribou herd in the Telkwa Ranges
Concerns	Land use uncertainties, lack of community support, declining industrial base.

7.1.3 Resource Assessment

7.1.3.1 AIR TOURS AND THE BULKLEY VALLEY

The Bulkley Study Area has geographical features well suited for the air tour product. The many mountain ranges, some with jagged peaks and others with rounded ridges, flower meadows with many small lakes and ponds (Sinclair & Microwave), the lakes and rivers provide a diversity of scenery and recreation opportunity. The primary staging point for the air tour is Smithers/Telkwa, and a 60 km radius touches all part of the study area with the exception of Nilkitkwa River to the northeast. Although, Smithers is noted as the primary staging area, there are opportunities for secondary staging areas associated to a recreation activity. The following discussion identifies the recreation resources within the 60 km range:

- The Western Unit: Rocher Deboule, Caribou, Sinclair, Howsons and Telkwa Ranges provide high air tour opportunities for viewing a dramatic landscapes of jagged peaks and small glaciers, including 6 in close proximity at the Howson Range and crystal clear mountain lakes. Air access can enhance recreation opportunities like mountain biking (primarily downhill) from trails in the area, including the Telkwa Pass, South Telwa and Mooseskin Johnny. Heli-fishing opportunities can be linked to the Sandstone/Hankin, Mooseskin Johnny, Burnie and other lakes. Consideration for fish populations which may be very sensitive to any increase in fishery pressure – bull trout, unique sub-species and few large fish in different instances. Heli-fishing is best managed by inclusion of local guides. Heli-hiking and picnicking opportunities can be associated with the rolling alpine of South Telkwa and the other ranges. Whitewater kayaking drop and pick up can be arranged along the Zymoetz (and Copper) River. Winter activities may provide opportunities for helicopter access to ski tours in the Red Canyon and Mulwain Rivers, the south Telkwa and other ridges. Within the 60 km range but outside the Study Area are the Kitseguekla, Seven Sisters, Mount Sir Robert and Ashman Ranges. Limitations to the air access are associated with the time required to access the area from the staging point (Smithers).
- Bulkley Valley and Adjoining Areas Unit provides excellent opportunities for the air tour and access product. The spectacular mountain ranges (Babine, Hudson Bay, North Telkwa, Rocher Deboule, Seaton Blunt) with jagged ridges and rolling alpine / subalpine, glaciers (Hudsons Bay Glacier), the lakes and others features so close to Smithers/Telkwa, makes this a very high opportunity area for air tours, heli-mountain biking, heli-ski touring, heli-hiking and picnicking. Air access within Babine Mountains Parks would require a park use permit for a helicopter company requiring access.

Wildlife viewing in the Study Areas is limited. Although present, the wildlife may not be consistently viewed and where there is an opportunity for viewing, the chances to disturb the wildlife is great and must be strictly considered.

7.1.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.1.4.1 MARKETS

There is no single market profile for helicopter supported activities. Activities include sightseeing, hiking, trekking/backpacking, trail riding, ATV riding, mountain biking, fishing, skiing and snowmobiling. Helicopter and fixed-wing touring is not confined to the conventional – for example, BC Golf Safaris (Whistler) flies golfers into the alpine for high-altitude golfing. In all cases, the helicopter is the primary mode of access to and from a central staging area.

There is existing competition in the Bulkley region for this activity. Both Canadian Helicopters Ltd. and Alpine Lakes Air conduct flightseeing, mountain-top picnics and heli-hiking.

7.1.4.2 IMPACTS/CONFLICTS

There is very strong pressure in prime US wilderness areas such as Hawaii and Alaska to reduce or eliminate helicopter tourism, particularly in park areas. Increased noise and access are considered the prime culprits in generating negative environmental impacts.

In BC, the BC Wildlife Federation has often called for a halt to the issuing of CR tenure that involve the use of helicopters in the alpine because of negative impacts on wildlife, their habitats, and also existing recreational users. US studies have shown that in western North America helicopter disturbance of mountain goats and mountain sheep extends to distances up to 2 kilometres. Grizzly impacts appear to be of most concern as it is believed that summer activities in which participants are dropped off in the alpine have been increasing the risk of grizzly/human conflicts, thereby increasing the probability grizzlies being destroyed for public safety.

7.1.4.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Considering that many high capability areas have Commercial Recreation tenures issued, or have tenure applications pending, in addition to the capital-intensive nature of this activity, the potential for expansion may be limited to existing tenure holders. Alternatively, an operator specializing in a core activity such as hiking could charter helicopter use on an as-needed basis.

Since the helicopter or airplane becomes the main mode of transportation to the staging area, the need for on-the-ground transportation infrastructure is considerably lessened. Having a well-serviced and active airport in Smithers can benefit the flight product. Once at the staging area, activity infrastructure is still required. Heli mountain biking and hiking still require proper trails and signage.

7.1.4.4 OVERALL POTENTIAL

The potential for flight-related outdoor activities in the Bulkley is favourable because almost the entire region is accessible within reasonable flying time of the Smithers airport. A multitude of activity options are within reach of a 10 to 15 minute ride. However, the overall low tourism volumes will ultimately limit the potential. Areas such as Vancouver and Whistler can offer flightseeing and heli services because there is a critical mass of visitor volumes. Despite the excellent resource attributes, Smithers cannot rely upon a deep pool of visitors.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA				
UNITS:		**Bulkley**	**Western**	**Northeast**
Markets	Demand	**Low**: affordability limited to higher-spending markets		
	Competition	**Medium**: heli-ski operators in other areas have the equipment, experience and tenure for product development		
	Overall potential	**Medium**: close proximity of features and airport favour development.		**Low**: remote and limited access to features
Impact/ Conflict	Use	**Medium**: concerns over wildlife impacts and conflicts with non-motorized backcountry activities.		
	Community/Social	**Low**: concerns would arise over noise depending on flight paths and frequency.		
Business Develop-ment Needs	Crown tenure	**High**: secured areas around high quality features or activities would be needed to justify capital investments.		
	Infrastructure	**Low**: transportation infrastructure already in place		**Low**: could base access through Smithers
	Capital	**Medium-High**: equipment is very high cost, but could be offset through leasing or utilizing existing heli services.		
Level of community support		**Medium**: product development would enhance tourism but also provide more business to the locally-run airport.		
Employment opportunities		**Low**: increases in business would likely be picked up by existing pilots and transport personnel		
	Opportunities	▸ Flight-seeing ▸ Heli-ski touring ▸ Heli-mountain biking ▸ Heli-hiking ▸ Heli-snowmobiling ▸ Heli-touring		▸ Flight-seeing

7.1.5 **High Opportunity Areas**

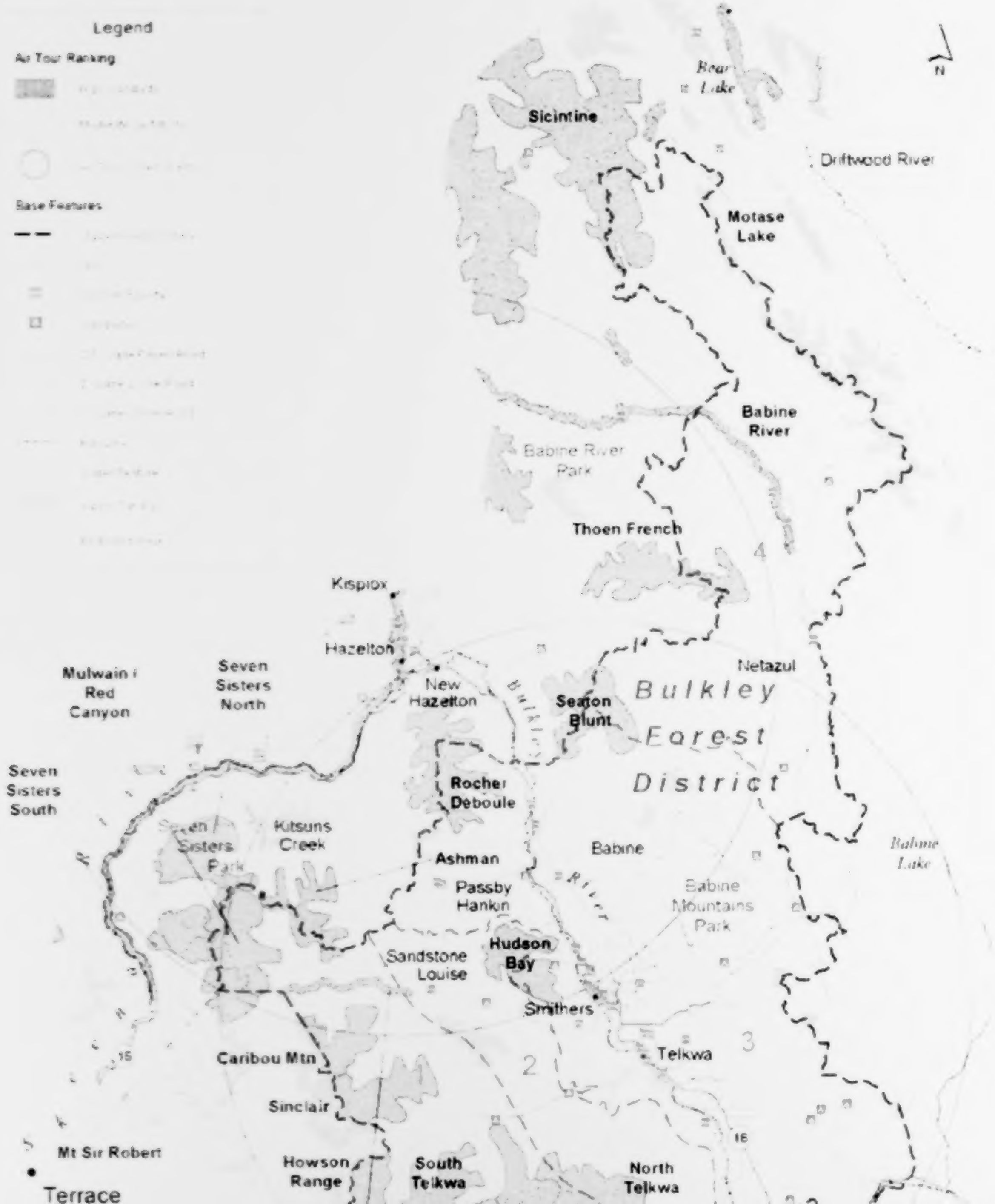
Description of Polygon	
Ashman Mt. Sir Robert Caribou Sinclair Red Canyon / Mulwain Telkwa Pass Zymoetz River	South Telkwa North Telkwa Mooseskin Johnny Howson Range Rocher Deboule Thoen French

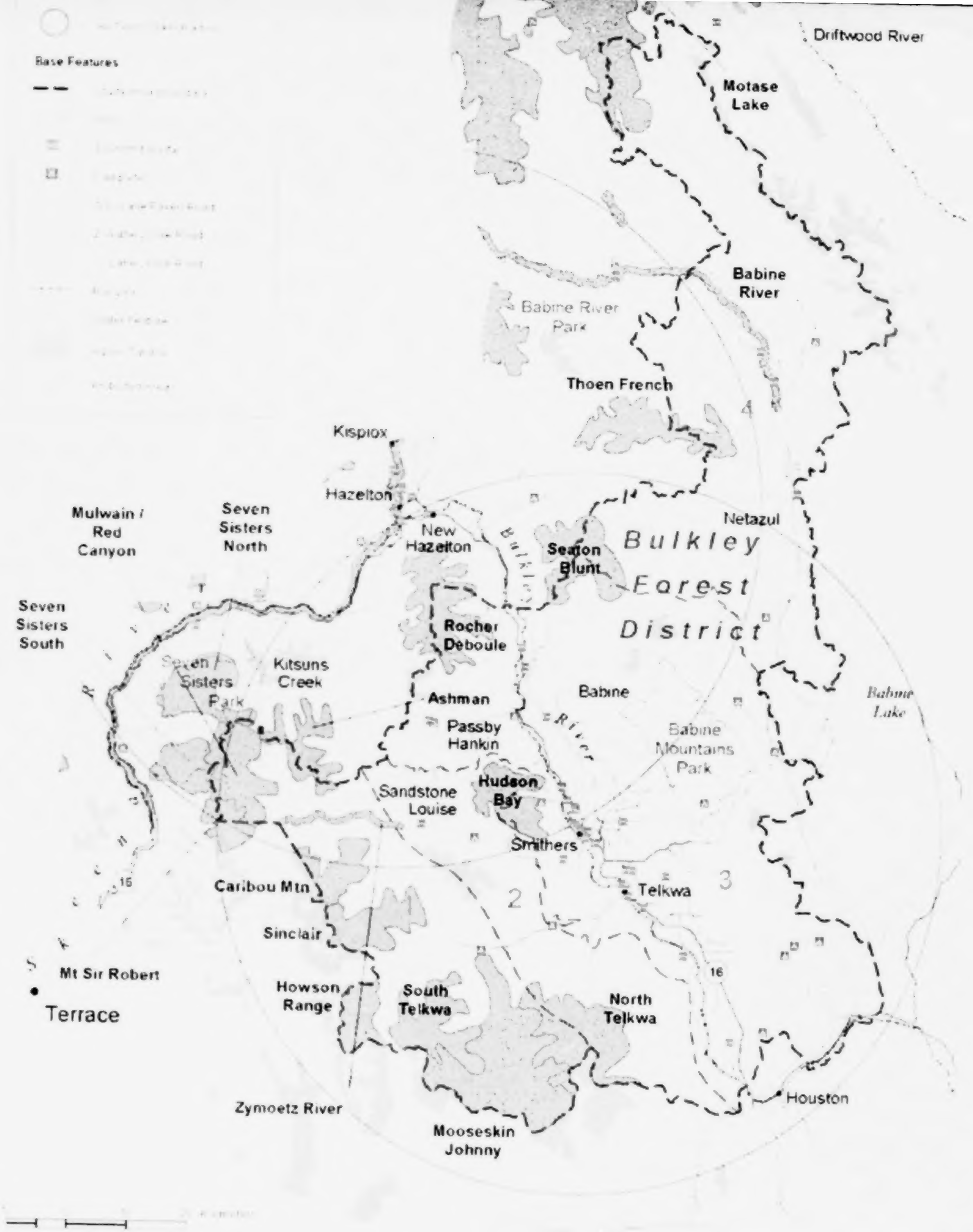
7.1.6 **Air Tour Suitability Map**

On the following page is the tourism suitability map for the Air Tour product (Exhibit 23).

Bulkley Tourism Opportunity Study

Air Tour Suitability


Legend
Air Tour Ranking
Base Features
Bear Lake
Sicintine
Driftwood River
Motase Lake
Babine River
Babine River Park
Thoen French
4
Kispiox
Hazelton
Netazul
Mulwain / Red Canyon
Seven Sisters North
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Seaton Blunt
Bulkley Forest District
Seven Sisters South
Rocher Deboule
Seven Sisters Park
Kitsuns Creek
Babine
Babine Lake
Ashman
Babine River
Passby Hankin
Babine Mountains Park
Sandstone Louise
Hudson Bay
Smithers
Telkwa
3
2
15
Caribou Mtn
Sinclair
16
Mt Sir Robert
Terrace
Howson Range
South Telkwa
North Telkwa
N

Base Features
Driftwood River
Motase Lake
Babine River
Babine River Park
Thoen French
4
Kispiox
Hazelton
Mulwain / Red Canyon
Seven Sisters North
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Seaton Blunt
Netazul
Bulkley Forest District
Seven Sisters South
Rocher Deboule
Seven Sisters Park
Kitsuns Creek
Ashman
Babine
Babine Lake
Passby Hankin
River
Babine Mountains Park
Sandstone Louise
Hudson Bay
Smithers
16
Caribou Mtn
Telkwa
3
2
1
Sinclair
Mt Sir Robert
16
Terrace
Howson Range
South Telkwa
North Telkwa
Houston
Zymoetz River
Mooseskin Johnny

7.2 Destination Lodge / Hut System

7.2.1 Description

The primary difference between the Hut and a Lodge:

Destinations Lodges offer private accommodations through separate rooms or cabins. Destination lodges or resorts perform the function of a regional anchor that can support a variety of outdoor adventure tourism products. Traditionally these activities have centered on fishing and hunting, but resorts are now focusing on non-consumptive activities such as nordic skiing, hiking, wildlife viewing and cultural interpretation (components of ecotourism). Activities associated with the lodge can be self-guided or guided with the lodge providing the guides or drawing on the services of local tourism entrepreneurs. Lodges can be accessed from the fly-in backcountry or the paved road frontcountry. The facility can be rustic with only the most basic features or offer full service amenities.

Huts generally offer shared sleeping quarters that may be booked by a single party or shared by different parties. They are meant to provide ecotourism recreationists with a degree of comfort in chosen settings. Huts are as a rule single rooms that provide a rustic experience but there are opportunities to increase the level of comfort through expanding the amenities. The hut system product can be a single destination hut in a particular setting or a string of huts that allow tourists and recreationists the opportunity to pursue their chosen activity unencumbered by the equipment required for multi-day excursions. A hut system allows those who are less skilled or physically fit to appreciate the more remote wilderness and participate more fully in ecotourism. Huts can be linked to and accessed by trails or waterways.

Hut types:

There are a number of single or system hut product types including:

Lake Huts:

- Suitable lakes are those with outstanding scenery and the presence of beaches, or a cluster of lakes or lakes that are large enough to contain a string of huts. These lakes should not have a perimeter road and the huts must only be accessed by boat, trails or by air.

Trail Huts:

- Best located where there is the presence of an established trail and is a suitable distance from road access. For winter activities a groomed route is an asset.
- Hut systems should be associated with loop trails whereas a destination hut can be at the end of a trail in an area with significant features or high recreation potential. May also be associated with a linear trail as long a drop-off and pick-up can be easily arranged.
- The hut systems can be clustered around outstanding features such as lakes or can be a string that provides shelter along a developed trail.

- Trail hut systems can be used in summer and winter for a variety of activities including hiking, ski touring and snowmobiling.

River Huts:

- The approach is generally in a down river direction.
- Should not be accessible by road.
- Should be perched on high ground and location must be readily apparent to prevent canoeists or kayakers into being forced to return upriver. Signs or symbols posted in visible locations can announce hut site but may be considered inappropriate intrusion in river users' wilderness experience.
- Preferable in areas identified for non-motorized use or areas in which motorized use is impractical or likely to remain low for various reasons.

Opportunities can be affected by cost of maintaining trails, repeatability elsewhere, high potential for vandalism and difficulty in maintaining the site.

7.2.2 Regional Overview

Strengths	Quick access to open extensive alpine and sub-alpine with quality scenic features. Dry snow conditions. Close to 60 trails and trail networks located within the study area. Local guides (who have training in a wide range of natural and cultural resources). Strong potential to provide in-depth learning or training in various natural and cultural resource fields
Weaknesses	Vandalism, repeatability of product, more remote alpine areas do not currently have trail access, Lack of maintenance on extensive existing trail system, cost to access region, compliance and enforcement
Concerns	Shortage of public sector funding to develop and maintain trails. Increased recreation use affecting "remote" experience. Wildlife disturbance and habituation. Obtaining agreement for a commercial hut system has the potential to be a lengthy & expensive process with extended discussions with local stakeholders, including First Nations people

7.2.3 Resource Assessment

The Bulkley Region is well suited for the Destination Lodges and the Hut system. The variety of terrain includes lakes, open sub-alpine and alpine ridges with small lakes, bowls, glaciers, icefields, meadows and availability of suitable trails and old mining roads. Optimal snowfall and the ready access from communities enhance the product viability in the region.

There are opportunities for Destination Lodges, Lake hut systems and Trail hut systems but due to the number of roads and private lands along the major rivers there is limited opportunities for a River hut system.

Existing Locations: There are huts and lodges situated in a number of locations through the region. Destinations lodges can be found along the Bulkley River, the Babine River, McDonell Lake, the Bulkley Valley, the Kitseguecla Valley and Babine Lake. Public (general or club) and private trail huts can be found in the Babine Mountains (3), Harold Price (2), Mooseskin Johnny Lake, and Dome Mountains, McDowell Lake, Trout Creek, The Microwave, the western end of the Hudson Bay Range and the Southern (Western) Telkwa Ranges.

***Future Opportunities*:** There are a number of opportunities linked to the Destination Lodge and Hut System in the Bulkley Region:

WESTERN UNIT

High trail based hut and destination lodge opportunities.

Destination Lodge:

The *Howson Range* with it's dramatic mountains, glaciers, glacier fed lakes (Burnie Lakes), lakes such as Tom George, proximity to rolling alpine, nearby historical mining activity, and the re-establishing caribou herd can be linked to a number of different activities from hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, nature observation in the summer to ski touring in the winter. Fishing can be linked to all seasons. Flying time from Smithers of just 30 minutes or so. A location best suited for a destination lodge. *High suitability.*

The *Mulwain Range* has dramatic mountains, small glaciers, tremendous views and is in relative proximity to the Seven Sisters. A wide array of summer activities and tremendous opportunities for winter ski touring, no current or expected road access, flying time from Smithers of just 30 minutes or so make this area an excellent candidate for the destination lodge product. *High suitability.*

Mooseskin Johnny Lake is an excellent candidate for a destination lodge with linkages to the Telkwa Ranges and the numerous recreation activities linked to the to the features that can potentially take place. Flying time access of less than 30 minutes. Note that an existing lodge does exist here but there is the potential to expand the operation. A lodge here and one in the Howsons could be linked with trails and a hut to provide a lodge to lodge adventure. *High suitability.*

Trail Huts:

A string of huts can be linked through the mountain ranges in the unit with a focus on *North to South Telkwa Ranges*. These huts will provide an opportunity for hikers to enjoy a level of comfort in a remote setting. Such a string of huts could potentially be tied to lodges at either Mooseskin Johnny or the Howsons area. *High suitability.*

Lake Huts:

Sandstone/Louise/Hankin Lakes are a cluster of medium sized lakes in forest and meadows. Good fishing. There are road linkages to McDonnell Lake and the Bulkley Valley. Area has some wet terrain with high insect populations, timber harvesting is evident in the surrounding areas and active winter harvesting activities reduce the road safety. *Moderate suitability.*

BULKLEY VALLEY AND ADJOINING AREAS

High lake and trail based destination lodges opportunities.

Destination Lodge:

Very many scenic locations exist in the Bulkley Valley with pastoral landscapes, mountain and glacier views and numerous mid-sized lakes and rivers. Easy access from a regional air port and paved roads is available between Houston & Hazelton. A great many nearby hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, 4x4 touring, fishing, skiing and snowmobiling opportunities exist as well as opportunities to view wildlife and experience northwest First Nations culture. A strong area tradition of educational programs provided by the Northwest Community College and private individuals provides a pool of talent to deliver educational and cultural activities.

Lake Huts:

The *Silvern Lakes* are a small cluster of lakes in the sub-alpine. These lakes and nearby ridge systems forming part of the Hudson Bay Range offer an opportunity for a number of small huts. Winter and summer opportunities and the distance but relative proximity to communities for management and maintenance is an asset. *High suitability.*

THE NORTHEAST

Babine and Nilkitkwa Lakes, the Babine River, the Grizzly bear viewing, the snow conditions of French Mountain and First Nations cultural interpretation provide a high quality backdrop to the Destination Lodge and Hut product.

Lake Huts:

The western shores of *Babine Lake* and the entirety of *Nilkitkwa Lake* provide tremendous opportunities for a hut experience accessible by boat or canoe. A series of huts with landing sites or small wharves can provide parties with choice of locations. The parties can even move from one location to another. The clear waters, the superb fish observation and excellent fishing of the lakes offer high value lake associated opportunities. The immense numbers of Sockeye salmon that return to the river in late August and September attract many bears and downstream of the Fisheries weir lies one of the highest concentrations of Grizzly bears in British Columbia.

Trail Huts and Destination Lodges:

Thoen French Mountain receives a great deal of snow and the quality is reputedly very good. There may be an opportunity to develop a destination hut to attract backcountry skiers or to develop a lodge with a cat skiing element to cater to a high end clientele. Investigation by parties knowledgeable in this type of skiing activity would be necessary.

Fort Babine and the Nat'oot'en people can provide a supportive cultural interpretation component to the Hut and Destination Lodge product in this unit.

7.2.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.2.4.1 MARKETS

Demographic changes in key markets indicate a growing demand for this product in North America and internationally, especially among baby boomers. Research has shown that a significant component of the ecotourism market is attracted to smaller, intimate, adventure-type accommodations, including cabins and lodges.[58] In particular, experienced ecotourists cite a strong preference for this type of accommodation.

Soft Adventure Traveller versus Activity Enthusiast - The soft adventure traveller looks for a lodge that will provide the best overall "experience". This includes a combination of the accommodation, food and activities offered that are high-end and/or unique. The activity enthusiast will select a lodge based on its location and support for a particular activity. This is particularly relevant for activities such as fishing or backcountry skiing, that are highly dependent on having particular resources, features and conditions.

General Consumer versus Experienced Ecotourist[59] - Lodges are generally preferred by the experienced ecotourist, with 66 percent stating cabins as their preferred choice of accommodation, followed by lodges/inns at 60 percent and tent/camping at 58 percent. In contract, the general consumer prefers to stay in hotels/motels (56 percent), although as lodges become more upscale and comfortable, they will gain increasing popularity with the general consumer as well.

Corporate versus Personal Traveller - Corporate travellers use lodges either for meetings with their own management teams and with clients and for incentive travel which is used as a means to reward/motivate employees. This segment looks for amenities such as meeting and conference rooms, fully equipped with telephones and Internet access. Individual rooms may also be required to have data access. As well, they will look for activities that promote interaction between people, particularly if the purpose of the trip is for team building for managers or with clients. The personal traveller is looking for a unique location and activities to do with friends and/or family. This segment values the overall ambiance of the location as well as opportunity to have both privacy as desired and opportunity to meet and share experiences with other guests in common areas.

Regional competition for the lodge/resort market is intense as there is extensive development in the Canadian Rockies (Alberta and BC), Kootenays and Coastal regions. The lure of the large, popular national parks in the Rockies is a strong draw for the lodge/resort crowd. In the immediate area, there are numerous fishing lodges and although many do not cater to the ecotourist, there are few barriers of entry into that market since they already have major investments in capital.

The demand for the lodge product in the Bulkley is low because the vast majority of current visitors are from the highway touring market. The ecotourist seeking a unique outdoor wilderness adventure within a lodge/resort setting is not currently represented in the Bulkley's visitor profile, not because the potential does not exist, but because there is very little product available.

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[58] Catalogue of Exemplary Practices in Adventure Travel and Ecotourism, Pamela Wight and Associates, March 1999.

[59] Greening of Remote Tourism Lodges, Pam Wight & Associates, 1994.

7.2.4.2 IMPACTS/CONFLICTS

Visual quality is a critical component of the destination lodge experience. Visitors invariably expect a wilderness experience and the visual impacts of timber harvesting can have a deleterious affect on business. There is an expectation of wilderness by lodge visitors, particularly among the international market. This puts lodge development in direct conflict with forest harvesting activity.

7.2.4.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Tenure is an essential element of lodge/resort development on Crown land. The resort/lodge product will not attract the necessary investment dollars if there are uncertainties regarding land access and resource use. This may necessitate a Crown lease rather than just a Licence of Occupation from the BC Assets and Land Corporation, or undertake a private land purchase, to ensure some degree of control over the use of the facilities by other tour operators or independent visitors. The length of time it takes to get approval for a lease or license of occupation from BCALC and the uncertainty associated with the process increases the risk of new investment. Communities can help manage that risk by undertaking pre-assessment work on preferred sites and opportunities.

ALR restrictions in the Bulkley Valley would limit site options for some lodge types, but private or IR land is preferred in some cases (e.g. Dude ranch).

Some lodges can be very self-sufficient and use very little public infrastructure. But in the frontcountry the lack of infrastructure, services, and labour supply can be a problem.

The trend toward a more full-service experience will favour more packaging as well as the lodge/resort style of holiday where the visitor does not have to make a series of purchase decisions once they have arrived. Spas and retreats that focused on the business and small convention market but with an outdoor component could be viable. First Nations interpretation is virtually untapped by lodges and resorts and could significantly enhance the current profile.

The business is capital intensive, meaning market entry will be limited. While this will constrain competition, it also means development can be a slow process. Although outdoor adventure could be considered a theme in and of itself, the increasing number of lodges provincially will dilute this as a differentiating factor. Therefore, specialization will become more important for a lodge to succeed.

A lodge's impact on community and economic development can be very favourable for several reasons. First, they are primarily land-based, generating job and income opportunities for nearby communities through site development, investment and ongoing operations. Second, they stimulate the capacity for increased visitation to the region by adding to the facilities inventory. Third, they target market and draw in new visitors thus diversifying the local tourism market profile. Finally, they can extend partnership opportunities to existing operators for guiding or other services, thereby enhancing the viability of small businesses in the region.

7.2.4.4 OVERALL POTENTIAL

There are many opportunities for themed development in the Bulkley. Alpine, river, First Nations and agri-tourism could all be exploited. The multi-activity lodge could be very successful in Smithers, Telkwa or Moricetown because of the proximity to so much quality outdoor activities.

This would necessitate establishing linkages with existing tourism operators who have commercial recreation tenure for complementary activities (e.g. wildlife viewing, hiking, and kayaking). By being multi-activity and multi-season, lodges should be in a better position to manage their cash flow and staff.

Opportunity for a First Nations lodge for cultural interpretation and exposition are very positive. The Office of the Wet'suwet'en has prepared preliminary plans for a facility at Moricetown Canyon. With good highway access and close proximity to important natural and cultural attributes this facility could create a critical mass of tourism activity in the area. It could be linked to hiking, biking, trail riding, agri-tourism, cultural interpretation and wildlife viewing (salmon). Training programs could easily be established to take advantage of the labour pool in Moricetown.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA

UNITS:		Bulkley	Western	Northeast
Markets	Demand	**Medium-High**: increasing demand for soft adventures with higher quality accommodation in remote settings.		
	Competition	**High**: extensive development and investments occurring nationally and provincially.		
	Overall potential	**Medium-High**: good access to features and theme development.		**Medium**: opportunities for theme development.
Impact/ Conflict	Use	**High**: major conflicts would be with forestry and its visual impacts.		
	Community/Social	**Low-Medium**: few impacts if located in the backcountry.		
Business Development Needs	Crown tenure	**High**: Crown lease would be required unless private property or IR land was available.		
	Infrastructure	**Medium**: good infrastructure in Smithers/Telkwa, but enhancements to Moricetown may be needed.		**Medium**: a variety of supportive services would be needed.
	Capital	**High**: land, building and equipment costs could range from $150,000 to several million dollars.		
Level of community support		**Medium**: generally supported by all communities, actively supported by First Nations communities.		
Employment opportunities		**High**: potential for full range of tourism positions and spin-offs.		
Opportunities		▸ Backcountry or river lodge ▸ Alpine lodges and huts ▸ Dude ranch ▸ Lodges focused on First Nations interpretation ▸ Packaging lodge-based outdoor recreation activities to business / conference markets ▸ Specialty lodges (golf- oriented) ▸ Ski Lodges		▸ Lodges focused on First Nations interpretation.

7.2.5 High Opportunity Areas

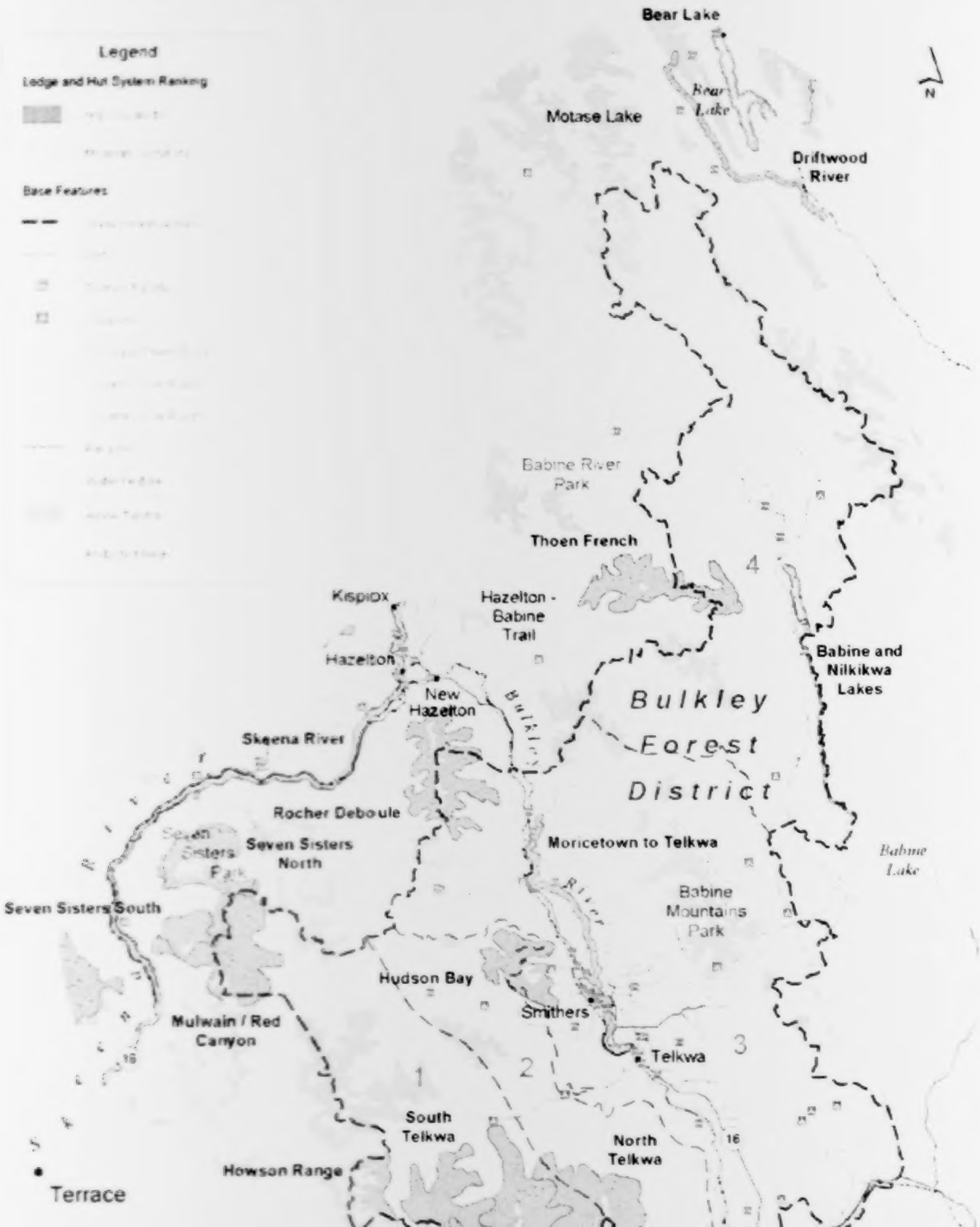
Polygon Names	
Howson Range	Thoen French
Red Mulwain Range	Vicinity of Moricetown to Telkwa
Mooseskin Johnny Lake	Silvern Lakes
North and South Telkwa	Babine and Nilkikwa Lake

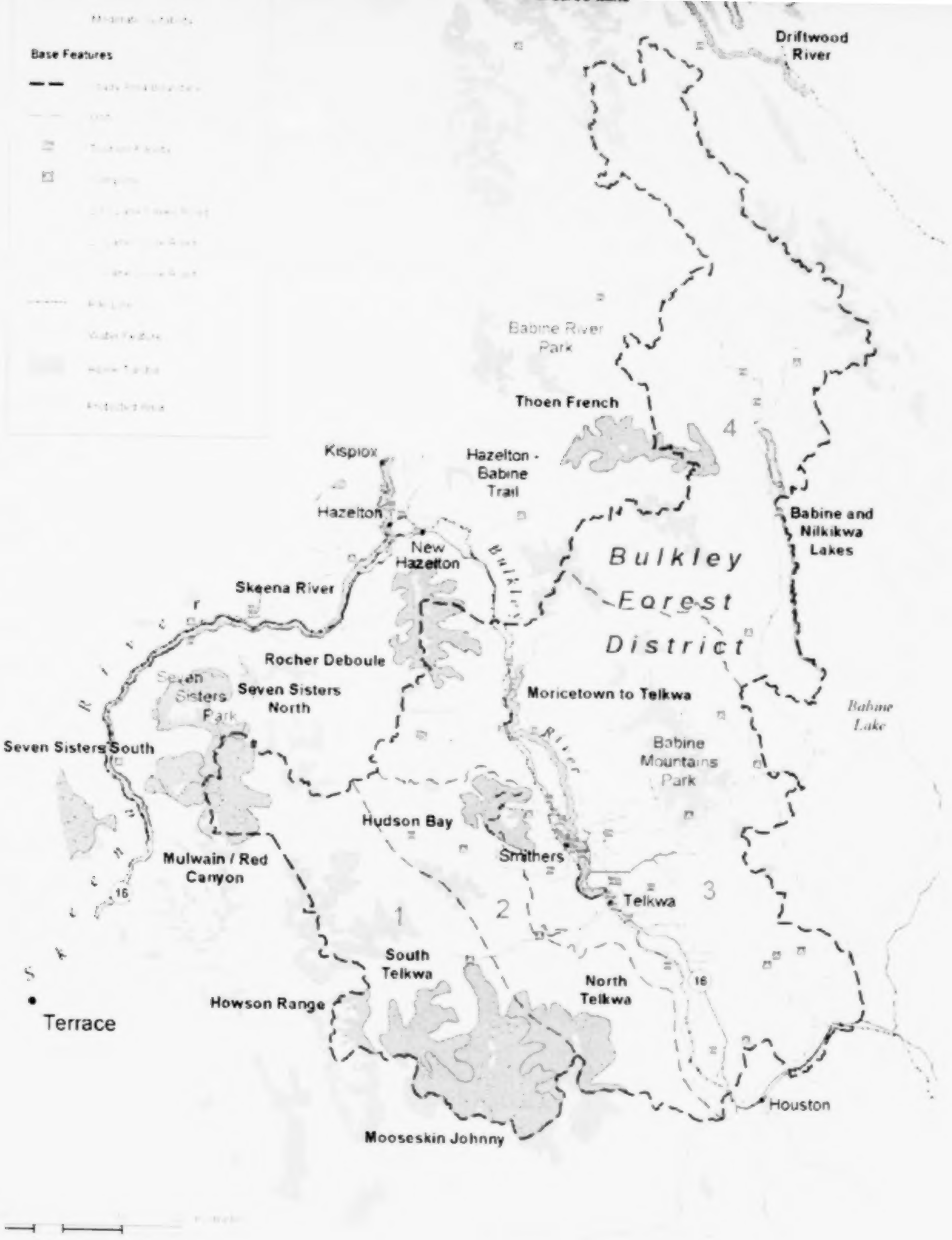
7.2.6 Destination Lodge & Hut Suitability Map

On the following page is the tourism suitability map for the destination lodge and hut system product (Exhibit 24).

Bulkley Tourism Opportunity Study

Destination Lodge and Hut System Suitability


Legend
Lodge and Hut System Ranking
Base Features
Bear Lake
Bear Lake
Motase Lake
N
Driftwood River
Babine River Park
Thoen French
4
Kispiox
Hazelton - Babine Trail
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Babine and Nilkikwa Lakes
Bulkley Forest District
Bulkley
Skeena River
Rocher Deboule
Seven Sisters Park
Seven Sisters North
Moricetown to Telkwa
Babine Lake
Babine Mountains Park
River
Seven Sisters South
Hudson Bay
Smithers
Mulwain / Red Canyon
16
Telkwa
3
1
2
South Telkwa
North Telkwa
16
Howson Range
Terrace


Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Study Area Boundary
Tourism Facility
Campsite
Rail Line
Water Feature
Protected Area
Driftwood River
Babine River Park
Thoen French
4
Kispiox
Hazelton - Babine Trail
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Bulkley River
Babine and Nilkikwa Lakes
Bulkley Forest District
Skeena River
Rocher Deboule
Seven Sisters Park
Seven Sisters North
Moricetown to Telkwa
Babine Lake
Seven Sisters South
Babine Mountains Park
Hudson Bay
Smithers
Mulwain / Red Canyon
Telkwa
3
16
1
2
South Telkwa
North Telkwa
Howson Range
Terrace
Skeena River
Houston
Mooseskin Johnny

7.3 Fresh Water Activity: Non-motorized and Motorized, includes Adventure

7.3.1 Description

The water activity product includes an array of recreation activities, including whitewater kayaking (adventure product), rafting, canoeing (non-motorized water product) and jet boating (motorized water product). Complementary features such as sport fish, waterfalls, rapids, pools, ledges, standing waves and other water features allow for more diverse product development.

7.3.2 Regional Overview

Strengths	A wide variety of flatwater to whitewater in the district, an active community of local kayakers, a well established whitewater shop with rentals. Existing skilled whitewater rafting operators.
Weaknesses	Opportunities for rafting on the Babine require considerable time to access. Limited class 3+ river opportunities.
Concerns	BC Parks is concerned that whitewater use on the Babine River may be approaching social carrying capacity – caps on use may occur. A number of access points to the Bulkley river occur on either private or Indian reserve land and could be closed in the future. Continuous growth of use on the Bulkley may lead to deterioration of the river experience.

7.3.3 Resource Assessment

The rivers and lakes in the region provide a variety of river whitewater classes suitable for all participant experience levels and different activities including, kayaking, canoeing, drifting and jet boating. The rivers have a range of settings that extend from the primitive (along the Babine) to the rural (along the Bulkely). However, the views from the rivers are predominantly natural. The region is noted for the long paddling season that extends from March to October. The region is internationally renowned for steelhead and salmon fishing.

The lakes range from glacially fed lakes (Burnie Lake), to lakes situated in deep valleys (Sandstone / Louise) to smaller lakes situated in the sub-alpine (Hudson Bay Mt and Babine Mts.) to those situated in the low elevations (Tyhee, McQuarrie for example)

The rivers in the Bulkley Plan Area are noted for a range of opportunities from the generally easy waters of the Bulkley River (to Moricetown) that are suitable for family excursions – to the whitewater opportunities of the Zymoetz.

There are a number of outstanding features associated with the rivers, including:

- the easy gradient between Houston and Telkwa,
- the standing wave on the Bulkley at Tatlow Falls,
- the extensive riffle below Telkwa to Smithers,
- easily accessible half day kayaking trip on the lower Telkwa River,

- family suitable canoeing, tubing or rafting on the easy water between Houston and Smithers with several road access points.
- Morricetown Canyon and the fascinating native dip net fishery.
- Wilderness kayaking and rafting in the class 3 and 4 waters of the Babine River.

The primary ***recreation rivers*** in the Study Area include:

- In the Bulkley Plan Area, the **Bulkley River** lacks the dramatic water required for a rafting activity (this opportunity begins in the adjoining Kispiox Forest District). The easy gradient between Houston is suitable for drifting and canoeing. The extensive riffles of the Bulkley River below Telkwa and of the Telkwa River provide a more challenging canoe adventure and opportunities for jet boating. There is a standing-wave at Tatlow Falls suitable as a "play" area for kayakers. Limited public access to the river.
- **Telkwa River** has extensive riffle and provides a range of classes suitable for various levels of non-motorized boating activities. Heavy rains cause the river to become turbid.
- **Babine River** is a 5 or 6-day wilderness river adventure in class 4 rapids. Coined as the "Valley of Eagles and Bears" the river is suitable for rafting and kayaking. The first 15 kilometers downstream of the Fisheries weir accepts motorized activities. Untouched landscapes associated are highlighted with the opportunity for viewing grizzly bears, viewing the First Nations fishery at Kisgegas canyon and (with permission) visiting the seasonally inhabited Indian village at Kisgegas. The river corridor is a BC Provincial Park. Spectacular scenery, abundant wildlife and stirring whitewater make the Babine River provincially significant. The opportunities of the river are shared with the Kispiox Forest District.
- **Nilkitkwa River** is a remote river that flows from the Scicintine Range. Numerous log jams, a lack of dramatic rapids and features and the generally level gradient results in low significance.

Exhibit 25: Bulkley Plan Area – River Descriptions

River	Location	Activity	Class	Comments
Bulkley upper	East of Telkwa	Canoeing Drifting	2	Flat water to Houston.
Mid	To Morice Town	Kayaking Canoeing	2	Morricetown Canyon offers a native net fishery ideal for nature observation and cultural interpretation.
Babine	From Babine Lake to the Skeena River	Rafting Kayaking	4	A wilderness river within a protected area. Restriction to the number of visitors may apply in the future.
Morice	South of Houston	Drifting Canoeing	1	Flat water. Upper reaches has log jams (and class 2 water below the outlet from Morice Lake).
Telkwa	Put in is 15 km up the valley.	Kayaking	2- 3+	An excellent river for beginner to intermediate.
Chlore	30 km to Copper	Kayaking	3 - 5	3 sections, the upper is class 3-4, mid is class 3 and the bottom is 3-5.
Copper (Zymoetz)	Starts McDonell Lake and emerges close to Terrace.	Kayaking	3-5+	Section between the Fossil beds and Matson Canyon is a 3, then a short class 4 stretch within the Matson Canyon emerging in a 5-5+ section for 5to 8 km..

The most ***recreationally significant lakes*** in the Study area include:

Babine Lake - a very large and clear lake whose western shores along the northeast arm borders the study area. Some gravel beaches along the shore. Motorized and non-motorized boating take place. This part of the lake may be suitable for houseboats.

Nilkitkwa Lake - a large lake at the head of the Babine River and is noted for tremendous fishing. Motorized and non-motorized boating takes place on the lake and there may be an opportunity for houseboats.

Rainbow Alley - the river section between Babine and Nilkitkwa Lake is renowned for trophy rainbow trout and is ideal for a gentle float.

Smaller lakes of significance include:

- *Chapman Lake* (fishing),
- *Tybee Lake* (front country lake with a beach, Provincial Park and large campground),
- *Lake Kathlyn & Round Lake* – community beaches and access points
- *Mooseskin Johnny Lake* (remote subalpine with existing fishing lodge & cabins),
- The *Burnie Lakes* (outside but linked to the Study Area), flanked by the Howsons Range and 6 glaciers),
- The lake groupings that include *Sandstone, Louis, Hankin, and McDonnel* (lakes of close proximity and good fishing),
- *McDonell Lake*, head of the Copper River, lodge on lake, good fishing
- Lakes with Forest recreation sites include: Jack Mould, Kitseguecla, Taltzen, Morin, Chapman, Dennis, Torkelson, Starvation,

7.3.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.3.4.1 MARKETS

Lakes/rivers activities include kayaking, rafting, canoeing and fishing. There is no single market profile for this product, but instead several distinct segments and sub-segments. Canoeing and river kayaking each have two sub-segments, recreational paddling and whitewater, the latter entailing more skill and experience by participants. Rafting in BC is generally conducted down whitewater sections of rivers, but can also entail floating. Freshwater fishing that occurs in streams, rivers, ponds or lakes. In BC, major species of interest include trout, char, salmon, steelhead and bass.

Kayaking and canoeing generally require a good fitness level, and have their strongest appeal among younger travellers. Kayaking/canoeing operators frequently include bird watching and nature observation as secondary activities. Kayaking/canoeing can also play a secondary role as part of other travel experiences that involve wilderness activities.

In Canada, river kayakers tend to be younger than ocean kayakers, between 20 and 44 years of age. The majority (60%) are male, and travel with friends (29%) or couples (28%). Participants are from Canada (82%), the U.S. (12%) and overseas (6%). The demand for kayaking has increased over the past decade as access to better quality equipment and instruction makes it easier to learn and become proficient at the sport.

The canoeing market differs from the kayak market in some important ways. Although many demographic characteristics are similar (the average canoe participant is under the age of 35 (53%) and male (62%)), they are much more likely to travel with friends (48%), and perhaps of most significance to commercial operators, are just as likely to be international visitors than Canadians. In 1996, forty-five percent of commercially guided canoeists were Canadian, while 31% were German and 14% American.[60]

Although not conclusive, Canadian visitor data does suggest that the river kayak product appeals mostly to Canadian participants and secondarily Americans, while the canoe product has a much stronger appeal for the German and American markets. In terms of absolute size, the market for canoeing is much larger than kayaking. Participation rates for river kayaking are among the lowest of all outdoor recreation activities.

The rafting market in Canada is fairly young, with two-thirds being between 20 and 44 years of age. The majority (55.1%) are male and the tendency is to travel with friends (41%) or in couples (24.7%). Among Canadian rafting operators, two thirds of customers are Canadian, 20% American and the remaining 15% from overseas. In the study area, the Babine is well known as a rafting destination, having brought provincial and international recognition.

There is extensive competition regionally and across Canada for canoeing, kayaking and rafting. Alberta Rockies, Kootenays, Thompson Okanagan and the Cariboo offer quality river/lake experiences, with similar features to the Bulkley. One product that the study area cannot offer is the multi-day trip lake system linked by waterways and portages such as is available at Bowron Lakes. Wilderness river/lakes activities and new products such as voyageur canoeing are available in all provinces.

There is expected to be continued growth in the future for canoeing especially and, to a lesser extent, kayaking. Canoeing is part of the North American heritage and is relatively easy to learn. It is also a portable activity as participants can easily take their boats to any river that is accessible by vehicle. River kayaking is a more demanding activity requiring considerable skill and higher levels of risk. Consequently it will probably grow more slowly than canoeing.

7.3.4.2 IMPACTS/CONFLICTS

Clients on commercially-led lake paddling trips are looking for a sense of isolation and wilderness. Typically, they do not want to hear or see motorized watercraft, highly altered landscapes or large-scale evidence of commercial harvesting. For some areas of the Bulkley, though, such conflicts are inevitable and will compromise tourism potential.

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[60] Adventure Travel and Ecotourism in Canada: Strategic Framework for Development, p.3-31, The Randolph Group, January 1997.

In the Northeast Unit, the Babine River and Rainbow Alley are already popular destinations for rafters, kayakers, canoeists, wildlife viewers and commercial fishing. Wildlife values are high, especially concerning salmon and grizzlies. But the area also comprises a large portion of the Bulkley/Cassiar Forest District's operable landbase and large inventory of its good quality sawlogs. The LRMP proposes to preserve angling values in this large area but mentions no other tourism values.

7.3.4.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Crown land tenure is generally not an issue with river and lake operators in the region as the frequency of trips do not warrant the associated time and cost. If an operator uses a specific land feature such as a beach or camp on a regular basis then CR tenure will be required. Also, if there is restricted access to a lake, then specific tenure for access or shoreline use areas for activities like camping and picnicking is required.

Whether canoeing, kayaking, rafting or fishing, the development of the lake/river product has to be tied to some outstanding recreational feature, aesthetic appeal or valued secondary activity. Infrastructure is also important as attracting participants and enthusiasts will require the development of more amenities to encourage stopovers. While this does not necessarily translate into high costs, minimum levels of access for put-ins and take-outs is essential. Good signage, as well as shuttling, supplies and rental services to self-guided users would also assist development.

More vertical integration of product design and marketing is required, including raising awareness of the potential of lakes and rivers among BC residents (i.e. enthusiasts who are activity-oriented travellers).

7.3.4.4 OVERALL POTENTIAL

The best potential is in the soft adventure/participant category for domestic, short-haul and German markets. All of these markets are seeking a broader outdoor adventure experience and will decide to participate in recreational paddling once in the region. The Bulkley can offer a range of close-in/remote adventures. Nature observation, wildlife viewing and fishing are also attractants for these markets. The German market, especially, is interested in wildlife viewing. Multi-activity packaging and interpretation is essential.

The major constraining factor is a lack of grade 3+ water that would attract enthusiasts and adventure seekers. Also the areas does not boast a lakes series with connecting waterways (rivers, streams) and portages that are usually preferred over single, isolated large lakes. Lakes connected in such a manner may provide opportunities for multi-day wilderness paddling trips. This should focus attention more on the casual participant interested in the softer, short duration adventures. Kayaking, rafting and fishing will be of more interest to the existing regional and short-haul travellers (western US and Canada) to the region, more so than canoeing.

The ability to package sport fishing, nature observation, historical interpretation with boating activities can help operators diversify, but avoidance of high use locations will be necessary to minimize conflicts with other users.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA				
UNITS:		Bulkley	Western	Northeast
Markets	Demand	**Medium**: rising participation rates, especially among participants (as opposed to hard enthusiasts)		
	Competition	**Medium-High**: several areas provincially with excellent river/lake systems for canoeing, kayaking and rafting		
	Overall potential	**High**: floating paddling adventures major rivers linked to other activities		**Medium**: remoteness a barrier
Impact/ Conflict	Use	**Medium**: multiple users (Telkwa, Bulkley, Babine) and carrying capacity concerns (Babine River). Extensive fishing activity		
	Community/Social	**Low**: relatively low impacts generated by non-motorized users		
Business Develop-ment Needs	Crown tenure	**Low**: needed only for repeated camping		
	Infrastructure	**Medium**: put-ins, take-outs and camping areas needed on more remote rivers		**Medium**: basic services and amenities required
	Capital	**Low**: canoes, kayaks, camping/cooking gear		
Level of community support		**Medium**: recognized in tourism plans, lake/river activities valued by residents		**Medium**: community already involved in product development
Employment opportunities		**Low-Medium**: opportunities for guiding, shuttling and hospitality positions depending on volumes		
Opportunities		▸ River rafting ▸ Voyageur canoeing ▸ River kayaking ▸ Multi-day paddling trips on the Bulkley and Telkwa rivers ▸ "Boat-in" experience at Hankin Lake ▸ Multi-activity packages including small lake fishing in the upper Copper River area ▸ Package with freshwater fishing ▸ Shuttling service		▸ Recreation paddling (canoe or kayak) ▸ Package with freshwater fishing ▸ River and lake camping ▸ Further commercial development of Babine Lake, Babine River and Nilkitkwa Lake in keeping with "wilderness" management plans

7.3.5 High Opportunity Areas

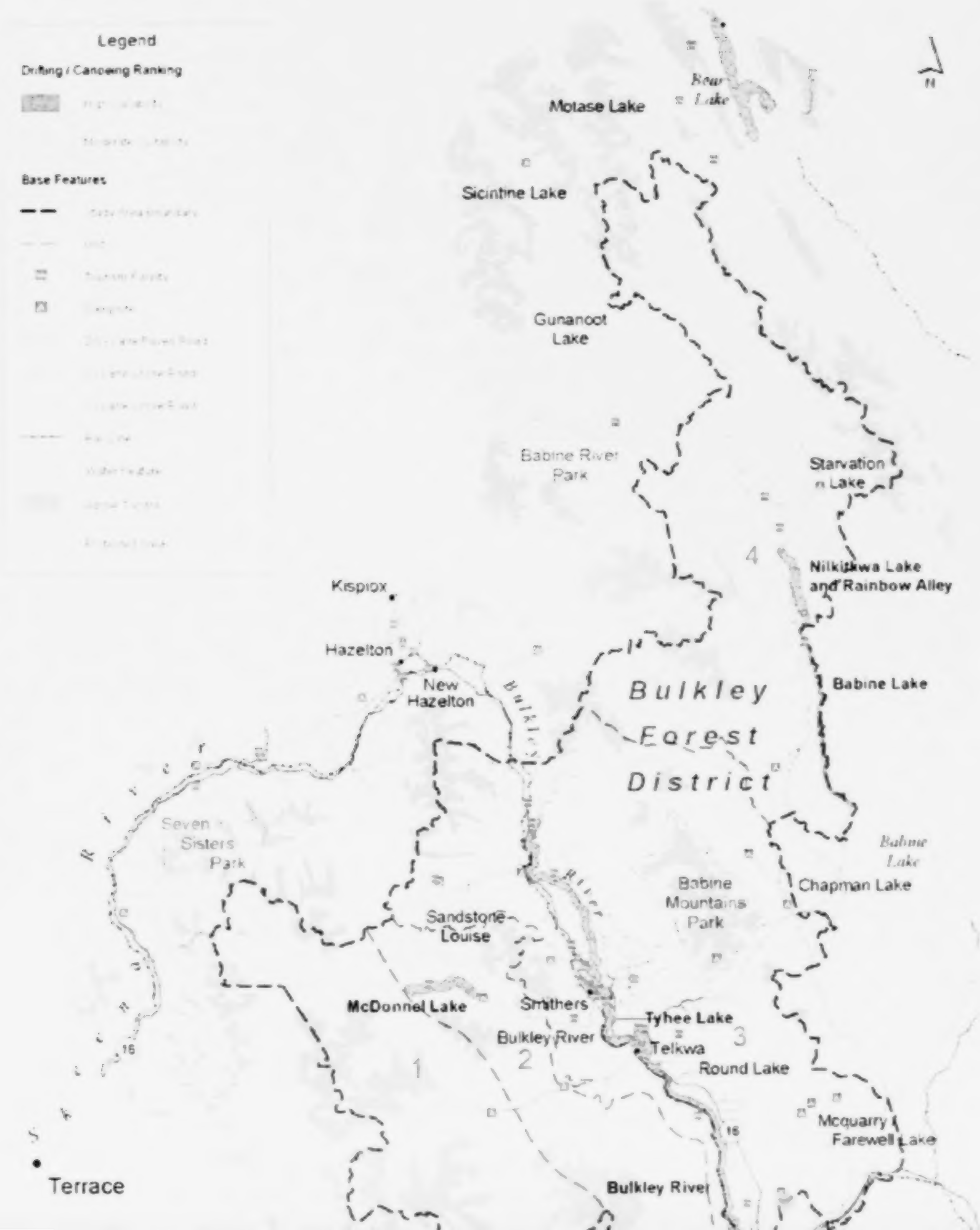
Polygon Names
Babine River
Lower Telkwa River
Nilkitkwa Lake and Rainbow Alley

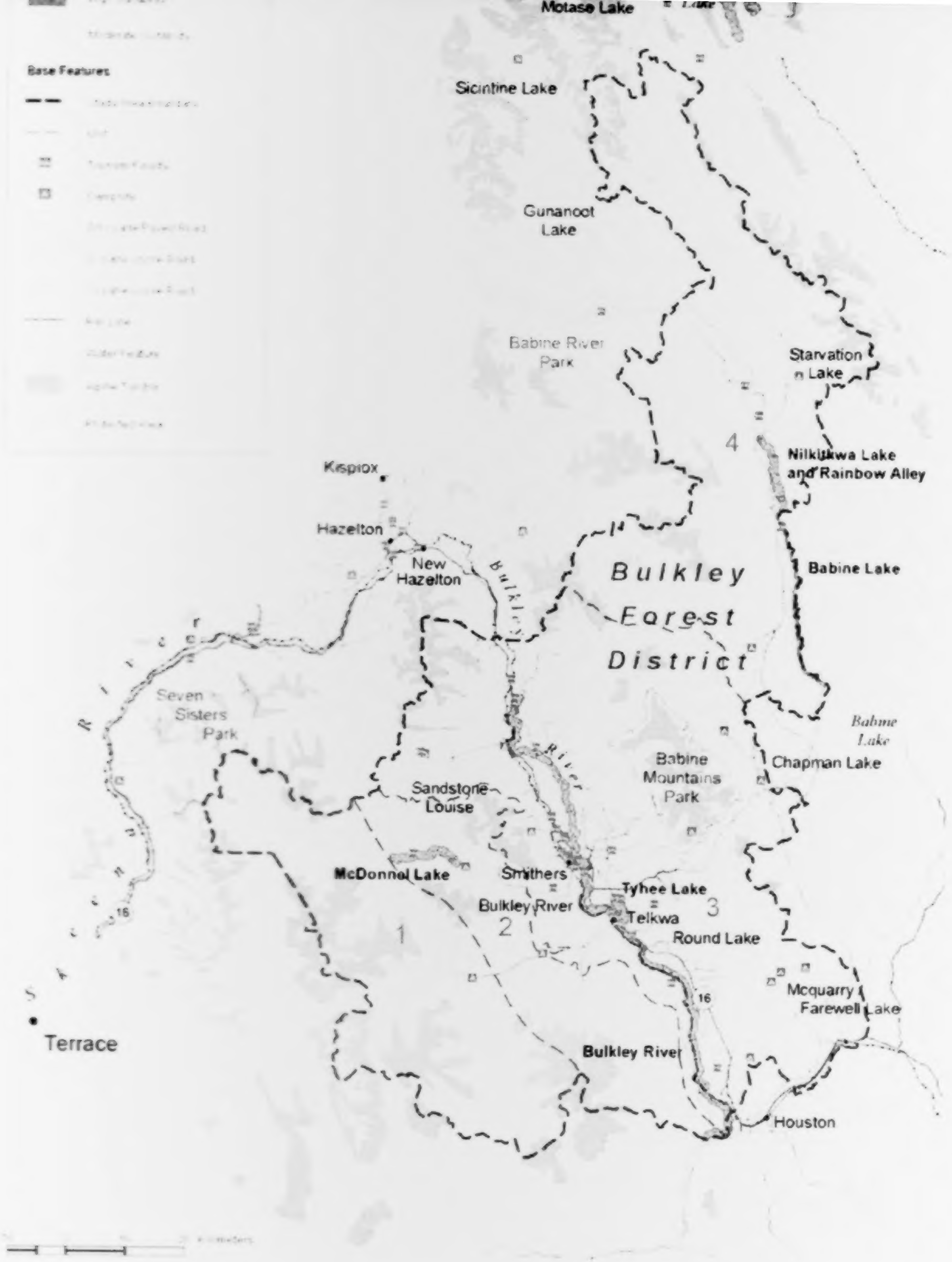
7.3.6 Fresh Water Acitivity – Suitability Maps

On the following pages are the tourism suitability maps for the Drifting/Canoeing product (Exhibit 26), Rafting product (Exhibit 27), and Kayaking product (Exhibit 28).

Bulkley Tourism Opportunity Study

Drifting / Canoeing Suitability

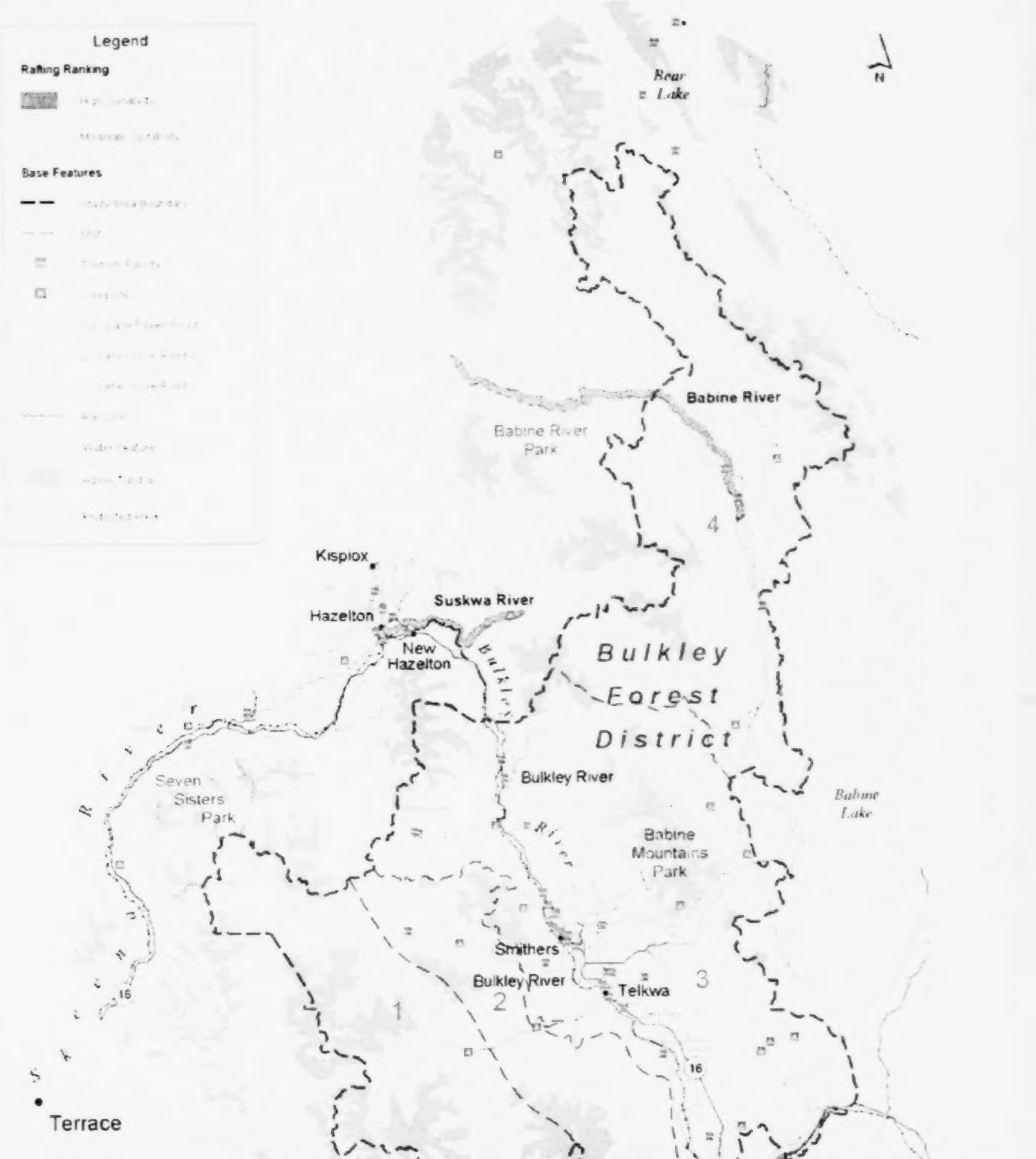

Legend
Drifting / Canoeing Ranking
High Suitability
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Tourism Facility
N
Bear Lake
Motase Lake
Sicintine Lake
Gunanoot Lake
Babine River Park
Starvation Lake
4
Nilkitkwa Lake and Rainbow Alley
Kispiox
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Bulkley Forest District
Babine Lake
Seven Sisters Park
Skeena River
Babine Lake
Chapman Lake
Babine Mountains Park
Sandstone Louise
River
McDonnel Lake
Smithers
Tyhee Lake
Bulkley River
Telkwa
3
1
2
Round Lake
16
16
Mcquarry Farewell Lake
Terrace
Bulkley River


Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Unit
Campsite
Rail Line
Water Feature
Alpine Tundra
Protected Area
Motase Lake
Sicintine Lake
Gunanoot Lake
Babine River Park
Starvation Lake
4
Nilkitkwa Lake and Rainbow Alley
Kispiox
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Bulkley Forest District
Babine Lake
Seven Sisters Park
Skeena River
Babine Lake
Chapman Lake
Babine Mountains Park
Sandstone Louise
River
McDonnel Lake
Smithers
Tyhee Lake
3
Telkwa
Bulkley River
2
1
16
Round Lake
Mcquarry Farewell Lake
16
Terrace
Bulkley River
Houston
Kilometers

121-133

Bulkley Tourism Opportunity Study

Rafting Suitability


Legend
Rafting Ranking
High Suitability
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Study Area Boundary
Unit
Tourism Points
Campsites
Rail Line
Water Feature
Alpine Tundra
Protected Areas
N
Bear Lake
Babine River
Babine River Park
4
Kispiox
Hazelton
Suskwa River
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Bulkley Forest District
Skeena River
Seven Sisters Park
Bulkley River
Babine Lake
Bulkley River
Babine Mountains Park
Smithers
Bulkley River
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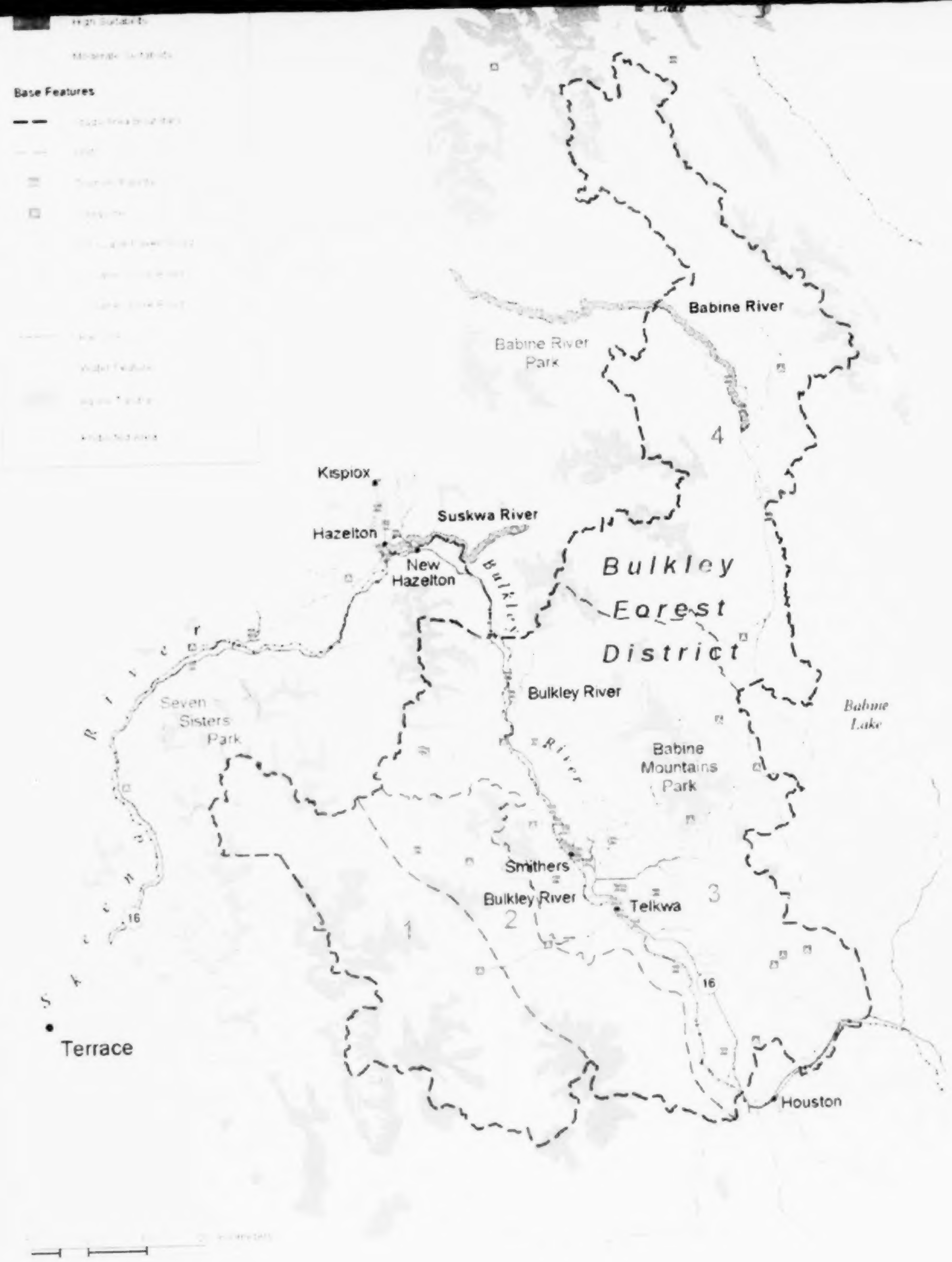
Terrace


High Suitability
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Study Area Boundary
Campsite
Water Feature
Protected Area
Lake
Babine River
Babine River Park
4
Kispiox
Suskwa River
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Bulkley Forest District
Skeena River
Seven Sisters Park
Bulkley River
River
Babine Mountains Park
Babine Lake
Smithers
Bulkley River
Telkwa
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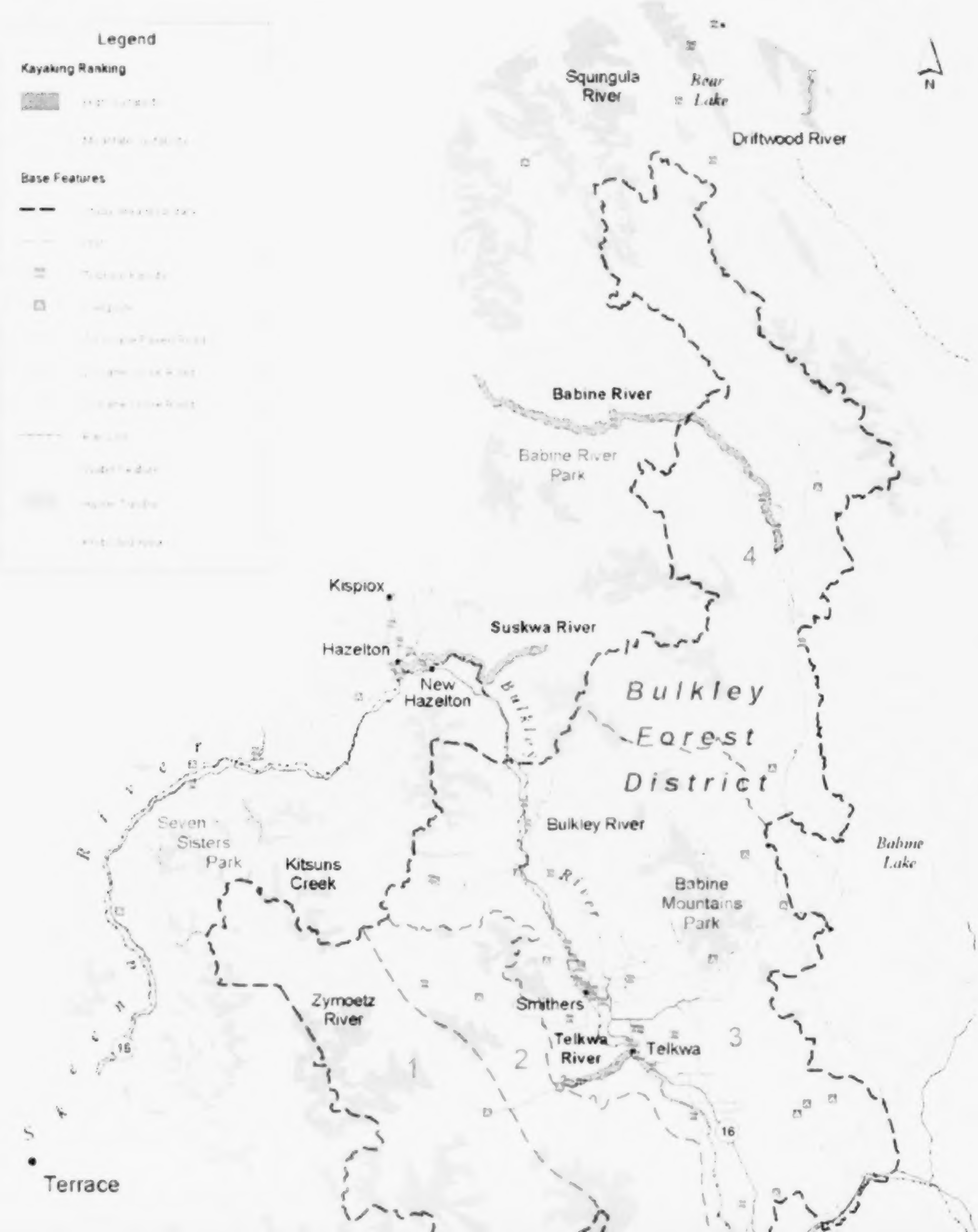
Terrace
Houston
Kilometers

Bulkley Tourism Opportunity Study

Kayaking Suitability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Kayaking Ranking
Base Features
N
Squingula River
Bear Lake
Driftwood River
Babine River
Babine River Park
4
Kispiox
Suskwa River
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Bulkley Forest District
Seven Sisters Park
Kitsuns Creek
Bulkley River
River
Babine Lake
Babine Mountains Park
Smithers
Zymoetz River
Telkwa River
Telkwa
1
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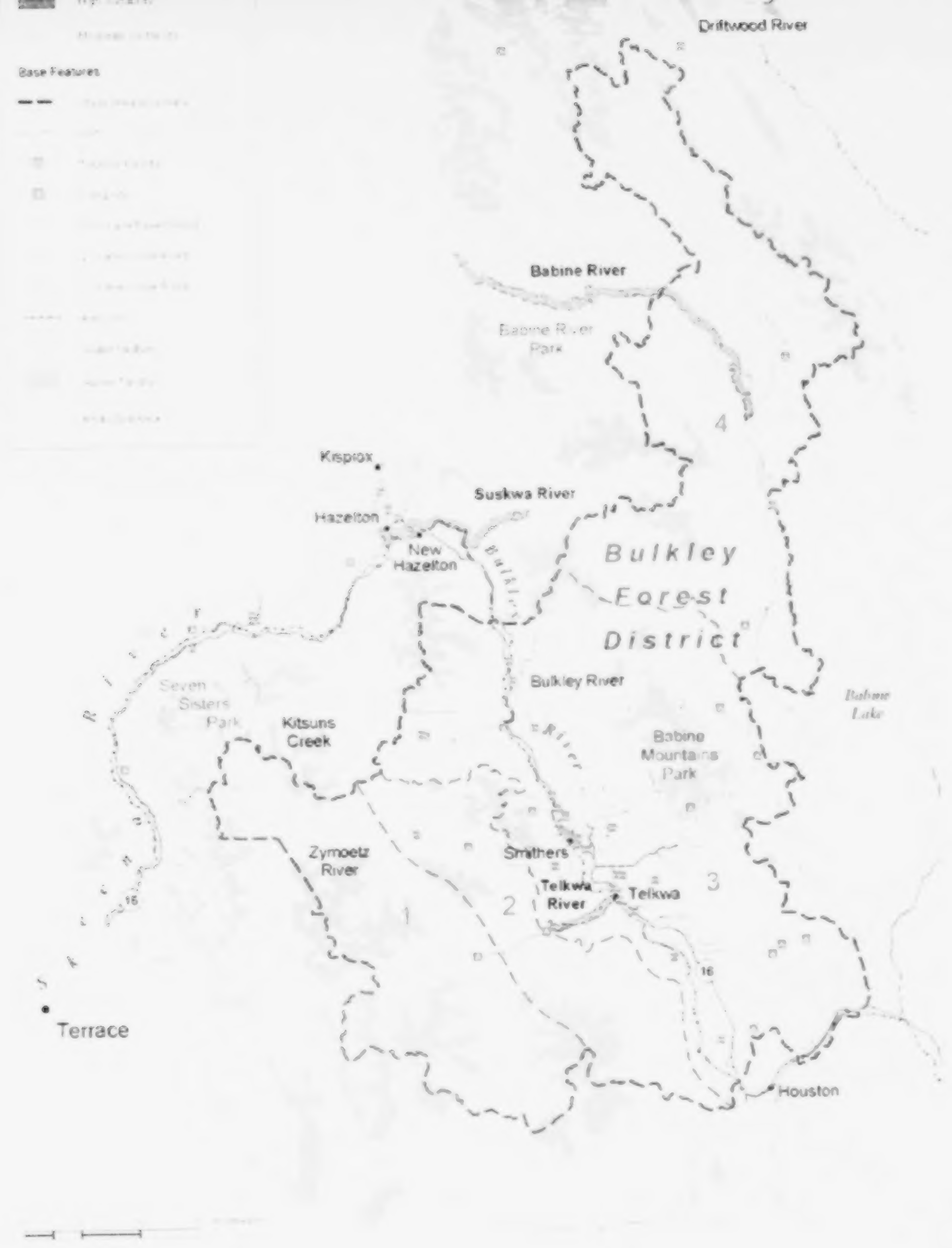
16
Skeena River
Terrace


Base Features
Driftwood River
Babine River
Babine River Park
4
Kispiox
Suskwa River
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Bulkley Forest District
Bulkley River
River
Skeena River
Seven Sisters Park
Kitsuns Creek
Babine Mountains Park
Babine Lake
Smithers
Zymoetz River
Telkwa River
Telkwa
1
2
3
16
Terrace
Houston

7.4 Mountain Biking

7.4.1 Description

Rugged and versatile, mountain bikes have 18-24 gears, use high-tech materials for sturdy yet lightweight frames, ride on fat, knobby tires, and feature a comfortable upright riding position and easy to use controls. Many now come with suspension forks and rear shocks for greater comfort and control in off-road riding.

Mountain bikes are great for trail riding, off-road excursions, and rugged touring. They can be ridden on virtually any type of terrain or surface. Minimal maintenance, maximum durability, and an unmatched fun factor make mountain bikes the best way to explore off-road.

The Mountain Biking Product is focused on the three categories, each with a specialized type of mountain bike:

Classic mountain or ***"cross-country" bikes***: Built for a variety of trails from steep hill climbs to steep single track gnarly trails. The bikes are built to be light and strong. Most are "hardtails" with no rear suspension, although the higher price bikes may have front and rear suspensions. This type of mountain biking is the most common and is the primary focus of the mountain biking product.

Downhill mountain bikes: Specially outfitted heavy-duty mountain bikes built primarily for navigating down steep single track, difficult or "gnarly" trails with achievable obstacles. As their name implies, they are great for going downhill, but their specialized geometry makes going uphill virtually impossible. Helicopters offer access opportunities to summits and staging areas.

Long distance trail bikes: The newest type of mountain bike is a combination of the "downhill" and "cross country" and may be called a "freeride," "dualsport" or simply a long-travel dual suspension bike. While not quite as efficient going up the hill as a hardtail, the long-travel dual-suspension bikes are more comfortable going down the hill and make longer, epic rides more comfortable and sometimes more fun. Long distance mountain biking requires the ability to carry heavier weights required for camping and a higher degree of comfort and durability. Preparation and close attention to safety are essential.

7.4.2 Regional Overview

Strength	Challenging recreation features close to staging areas suitable for a range of mountain biking opportunities. Attractiveness to a growing market. Fosters image of community as an outdoor destination. Closeness of features to communities. A MB guidebook with maps and the local biking community has published additional maps for Hudson Bay Mtn trails. Supportive infrastructure such as trails and retail outlets providing supplies.
Weakness	Distance from markets, lack of destination status.
Concerns	Lack of community support. Potential for conflicts between hikers, horse riders and bikers. Reduced funding for maintenance of trails by the responsible agency (BC Parks and MoF)

7.4.3 Resource Assessment

The Bulkley Study Area has numerous "trails" that were developed by trappers, miners, First Nations and recreation users. Other routes utilized by mountain bikers include forestry roads. Bike enthusiasts have also developed a number of their own trails on Hudson Bay Mountain close to Smithers.

Existing opportunities include:

Classic or Cross-Country mountain bike opportunities can take place in the many trails and roads in front and mid country. The trails used can be primarily for hiking. The most popular established trails acceptable to mountain biking include:

BULKLEY VALLEY AND ADJOINING RANGES		Suitability
Frontcountry Trails	**General Description:** Trails close to communities and road access. **Primary Trails:** Malkow Lookout (trail provides views of the Bulkley Valley, is a moderate ride), Telkwa Community (wide gravel trails along river, through Telkwa to Tyhee Lake Park, several sets of stairs but otherwise suitable for family use), Perimeter (Trail is easy family oriented, which circumnavigates the Smithers), and Call Lake Trail (east of Smithers). **Comments:** These trails are predominantly for local use but can provide for a diversity of opportunities in the valley. **Other existing activities:** Hiking, horse riding	**H**
Babine Range	**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine/ alpine Glacier, lakes and deep valleys. Gravel roads lead to established trails that extend to sub-alpine. **Primary Trails:** Cronin Pass (trail with difficult sections), Dome Mountain (an old mining road provides a moderate ride to a snowmobile cabin in the Morice F. D.), Harvey Mtn. (trail provides views of Silver King and Hudson Bay Mountains and the Bulkley Valley), Hyland Pass (trail links the Cronin Pass and Silver King Basin trails), Silver King Basin (road and trail provides access into the alpine), Onion Mountain Road (steep trail that leads to snowmobile cabins), Higgins Creek (links Little Joe trail with Cronin), Little Joe Trail (trail through sub-alpine). **Comments:** Established trails. Babine Range to the Astlais Mountain. Park. Reiseter extension has a commercial horse use. Hikers use all trails. Historical mining activity evident. New BC Parks cabin in Silverking Basin **Other activities:** Hiking, backpacking, horse riding.	**H**
Hudson Bay Range	**General Description:** Dramatic peak and glaciers, cirque basins, creeks and lakes (Silvern and Crater Lakes). Extensive mountain biking trail network to subalpine and lakes. **Primary Trails:** Simpson Creek (an old mining road with impressive views of the Bulkley Valley and Babine Range), Toboggan Creek (a very rough old mining road to alpine and Silvern Lakes). Currently high use and very popular with local residents. **Comments:** Extensive trail networks. **Other activities:** Hiking, horse riding.	**H**
Microwave	**General Description:** Many small lakes, ponds, creeks, extensive flower meadows on a subalpine plateau **Primary Trails:** Winfield Creek road provides access to the subalpine. **Comments:** Road accessible alpine/subalpine meadows, extensive road network in the alpine. Currently high use and very popular with local residents. **Other activities:** Hiking, backpacking, animal assisted, horse riding.	**H**

BULKLEY VALLEY AND ADJOINING RANGES		Suitability
Dome Mountain	**General Description:** Small subalpine ridge in the Morice Forest District. **Primary Trails:** Dome Mountain **Comments:** An old mining road provides a moderate ride to a snowmobile cabin. **Other activities:** Hiking, horse riding, ATV.	M
Sandstone Louise	**General Description:** Access from McDonnel Lakes leads to the Hankin, Sandstone, Sandstone/Louis, and Jack Mould Lake group. **Primary Trails:** Ski Smithers and the northeast slope. **Comments:** Opportunity to develop circle tours linking the lakes. Wet terrain is a limitation. **Other activities:** Hiking, animal assisted, horse riding, ATV.	M
Rocher Deboule	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, small glacier, many cirque basins. **Primary Trails:** Boulder Creek Trail **Comments:** Steep terrain with limited opportunities for subalpine off road travel. **Other activities:** Hiking, animal assisted.	L
North Telkwa	**General Description**: Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine. Small glacier and lakes. Logging roads lead to trails and hiking opportunities. West of range lies the Mooseskin Johnny Lakes. High wildlife values (caribou). **Primary Trails:** Hunter Basin Road **Comments:** Extensive evidence of historical mining activity, great views of the Bulkley Valley from Houston to Moricetown. Steep sections. Sensitive to the requirements of the mountain caribou. **Other activities:** Hiking, backpacking, animal assisted, horse riding.	M

The Downhill component of mountain biking may utilize the steep logging roads and trails close to the Bulkley Valley. This product may require the specialized development of appropriate trails and require the utilization of the existing ski hill or a helicopter drop-off. Existing opportunities can be linked to the:

BULKLEY VALLEY AND ADJOINING RANGES	
Hudson Bay Range	**General Description:** Steep slopes, small glacier, lakes and rounded subalpine ridges. Ski mountain. **Primary Trails:** Ski Smithers and the northeast slope. **Comments:** Close to communities. The ski mountain has the potential to open the slopes to downhill biking in the summer months. **Other activities:** Hiking, backpacking, animal assisted, horse riding.

Long distance mountain biking opportunities may lie with existing sections of the grease trails, mining trails and Telegraph trail. Existing opportunities with *high significance* include:

WESTERN	
Telkwa Pass	**General Description:** Road that leads to Terrace through subalpine. **Primary Trails:** Telkwa Pass **Comments:** A popular route links Telkwa and Terrace. An excellent overnight trip. **Other activities:** Backpacking, animal assisted, horse riding, ATV.

Mooseskin Johnny	**General Description:** Road that leads to Mooseskin Johnny Lakes. **Primary Trails:** Mooseskin Johnny **Comments:** Road leads to Mooseskin Johnny lakes and to the trails that lead to North and South Telkwa ranges. **Other activities:** Backpacking, animal assisted, horse riding.

NORTHEAST	
Suskwa Pass Trail	**General Description:** Long distance trail opportunity linked to the Suskwa Pass Trail, 20 km. route of historic wagon supply trail from Hazelton to Fort Babine. **Primary Trails:** Suskwa Pass trail. **Comments:** Potential product opportunity to extend and develop the trail (linking historical values). **Other activities:** Backpacking, animal assisted, horse riding.

Opportunities for all the mountain biking sub-products can be enhanced through:

- proper trail development and maintenance
- the identification of trails in areas with the highest potential with consideration for:
- recreation feature groupings,
- circle routes,
- suitable terrain,
- access to staging areas,
- environmental constraints,
- associated products including air access and hut system or destination lodge.

Potential opportunities can be enhanced through the development of a:

- link between the different communities of the Bulkley Valley (from Houston to Hazelton) would have significant potential.
- Heli-mountain biking (downhill focus) opportunities along the northeast slopes of the Hudson Bay Range and the Rocher Deboule.

7.4.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.4.4.1 MARKETS

The age demographic for mountain biking is young (approximately two-thirds less than 40 years of age) with about equal portions of males and females. Participants usually travel either with friends or as couples - families with children have a very small share of this market. For Canada as a whole, more than 83% of all visitors participating in biking are Canadian. The international market is small at this time, as this is not a prime activity among the adventure market. In BC, the latest visitor data suggests a different pattern: biking has a fair degree of popularity among non-residents as an outdoor activity, with a participation rate of 26%. Many of these non-residents are believed to be

US visitors.[61] Canadians outside BC have a participation rate of 35%. Both of these rates are higher than BC resident visitors, who have a participation rate of 17%.[62]

Most businesses involved in bicycle ventures in British Columbia are associated with multi-day frontcountry road touring. In the US, while overall bicycling participation has been fairly static, there has been significant growth in bicycling touring vacations (82% between 1989 and 1994). The share of the total biking market held by mountain biking is small compared to bicycle touring.

There are few guided mountain biking businesses in British Columbia, and the guiding side of mountain biking is in its infancy. This stems from the fact that most mountain biking participants prefer to cycle independently. The activity is more strenuous, requires more fitness, usually requires more specialized equipment and has an added element of danger that limit its overall market appeal. Yet its popularity keeps expanding. As mountain bikers age, go further afield for new experiences, and are able to penetrate deeper into the backcountry, the demand for a guided experience can be expected to increase. There will be more demand for guided mountain biking experiences in the mid to longer term.

Competition is intense for the both the touring and mountain biking participant, regionally and provincially. The Bulkley Plan Area does not have a reputation as a touring destination such as is found on the Gulf Islands and southern Vancouver Island. There, island communities, the lack of high speed through-traffic and dispersed hospitality amenities, cultural features and artist networks provide an excellent backdrop for product development. In terms of mountain biking, North Vancouver, Squamish and Whistler are considered by enthusiasts to be among the premier destinations for extreme free-riding. Trails and amenities are well developed in many places around the province. The BC Mountain Bike Directory[63] lists over 250 trails, only one of which is in the study area, at Call Mountain. In Canada, there are no comparable areas to the US mecca of mountain biking, Moab, Utah. Another evolving opportunity that could be a possibility in Smithers is the conversion of downhill ski venues into mountain biking areas. The presence of developed trails and lift capacity has been employed in other communities such as Whistler. In Moab, the very popular Skyway Scenic Chairlift was opened in 1999, giving bikers a ride up to the top of Moab Rim from where they could ride downhill.

7.4.4.2 IMPACTS/CONFLICTS

Resource use conflicts can be a problem, especially if off-road mountain bikers compete with other trail users and motorized vehicles, although this has not been a problem to date in the region.

Where activities occur within designated Forest Recreation Sites, they must comply with the recreation management objectives established by the Ministry of Forests for the site. Further, the use of logging roads for access may face conflict with active logging operations.

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[61] Among non-resident visitors to Canada in 1995, US visitors had by far the highest participation rate for bicycling at 15%. No European market was above 3%. [*Adventure Travel in Canada: An Overview of Product, Market and Business Potential*, Tourism Canada, 1995]

[62] *BC Visitor Study Report on Travel in British Columbia*, Tourism BC, 1997.

[63] http://www.mtb.bc.ca/trails/

All mountain bikers should be encouraged to comply with the Rules of the Trail as stipulated by the International Mountain Bicycling Association.[64]

7.4.4.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

All commercial recreation activities occurring on provincial crown land require a tenure that is issued by the British Columbia's Assets and Land Corporation - Commercial Recreation Policy and Procedures[65]. Tenured forest licensees on provincial crown land are typically part of the referral process for any commercial recreation application within or affecting their forest tenure areas. Proponents will need to work with these forest licensees.

Mountain biking outfitters tend to generate lower average revenues than most other outdoor operators. In 1994, the average annual revenue for Canadian biking outfits was only $50,000, although low operating costs and gross margins of above 30% means operators can generate solid returns. However operators involved in some other primary outdoor product can easily offer a mountain biking experience by purchasing their own equipment.

Technological change is impacting this market, most noticeably in the off-road category. Improved frame design and the introduction of front and rear shock-absorber technologies have allowed mountain bikers to penetrate deeper into the backcountry and to enter areas that were previously considered un-rideable and to undertake experience specific activities such as downhill mountain biking.

All commercial activities that occur on provincial crown land require appropriate liability insurance coverage.

7.4.4.4 OVERALL POTENTIAL

The potential is average for this product in the Bulkley, with the best opportunities close in to Smithers and Telkwa. Mountain biking and tour operators will need to collaborate with the local accommodation industry and other tourism providers to support their product. Packaging with other guided activities will extend the reach to soft adventurers. Developing commercial ventures in the study area will be a real challenge because it is often convenient to engage in unguided activities. The key will be providing convenient support services (shuttling, rentals, repair, accommodation, meals, interpretation) to convert these participants to buyers of a value-added product. Some of these services are available now from the McBride Shop in Smithers.

Downhill ski areas are realizing the potential of summer activities. Hudson's Bay Mountain presents a mix between the purpose-built biking trails (gnarly trails with more obstacles) to attracts extreme enthusiasts and family-oriented trails to encourage extended stays and spending in the area.

Fort Babine has the opportunity to develop trails and infrastructure in the Babine Lake area to attract tourists. The lack of trails, infrastructure and accommodation constrains development. A further consideration is that the relatively remote access and industrial road usage will deter visitors from utilizing the Babine Lake area.

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[64] IMBA, Route 2, Box 303, Bishop, California 93514, USA.

[65] The provincial *Land Act* requires individuals who want to use Crown land for CR purposes to apply for tenure to do so. The BC Assets and Lands Corporation (BCAL) issues these tenures on behalf of the Minister of Environment, Lands and Parks.

<table>
<tr><th colspan="5">MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA</th></tr>
<tr><th colspan="2">UNITS:</th><th>Western Ranges</th><th>Bulkley Valley</th><th>Northeast</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Markets</td><td>Demand</td><td colspan="3">Low- Medium: good participation, average growth, rising demand among extreme markets</td></tr>
<tr><td>Competition</td><td colspan="3">High: extensive trail development around the province, destination status in North Vancouver/Squamish/Whistler</td></tr>
<tr><td>Overall potential</td><td colspan="2">Medium: close-in potential, but low visitor volumes and short season will limit development</td><td>Low: remote, no development</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Impact/ Conflict</td><td>Use</td><td colspan="3">Low: mostly resident activity near Smithers, limited commercial guiding</td></tr>
<tr><td>Community/Social</td><td colspan="3">Low: generally low impact activity conforming to community tourism planning</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Business Development Needs</td><td>Crown tenure</td><td colspan="3">Low: needed only for repeated usage and multi-day trips</td></tr>
<tr><td>Infrastructure</td><td colspan="2">Medium: trail maintenance/upkeep</td><td>High: trails, accommodation, services</td></tr>
<tr><td>Capital</td><td colspan="3">Low: bikes, camping gear</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Level of community support</td><td colspan="2">Medium-High: active cycling club, servicing, trail development</td><td>Low: lack of capacity</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Employment opportunities</td><td colspan="3">Low: increased activity likely to be picked up by existing operators with unused capacity</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Opportunities</td><td colspan="2">▸ Guided mountain biking
▸ Heli-biking
▸ Ski slope biking
▸ Event promotion
▸ Bike rental/service shop (Moricetown)
▸ Shuttling services</td><td>▸ Heli-biking
▸ Trail development
▸ Shuttling services
▸ Bike-accommodation packages</td></tr>
</table>

7.4.5 High Opportunity Areas

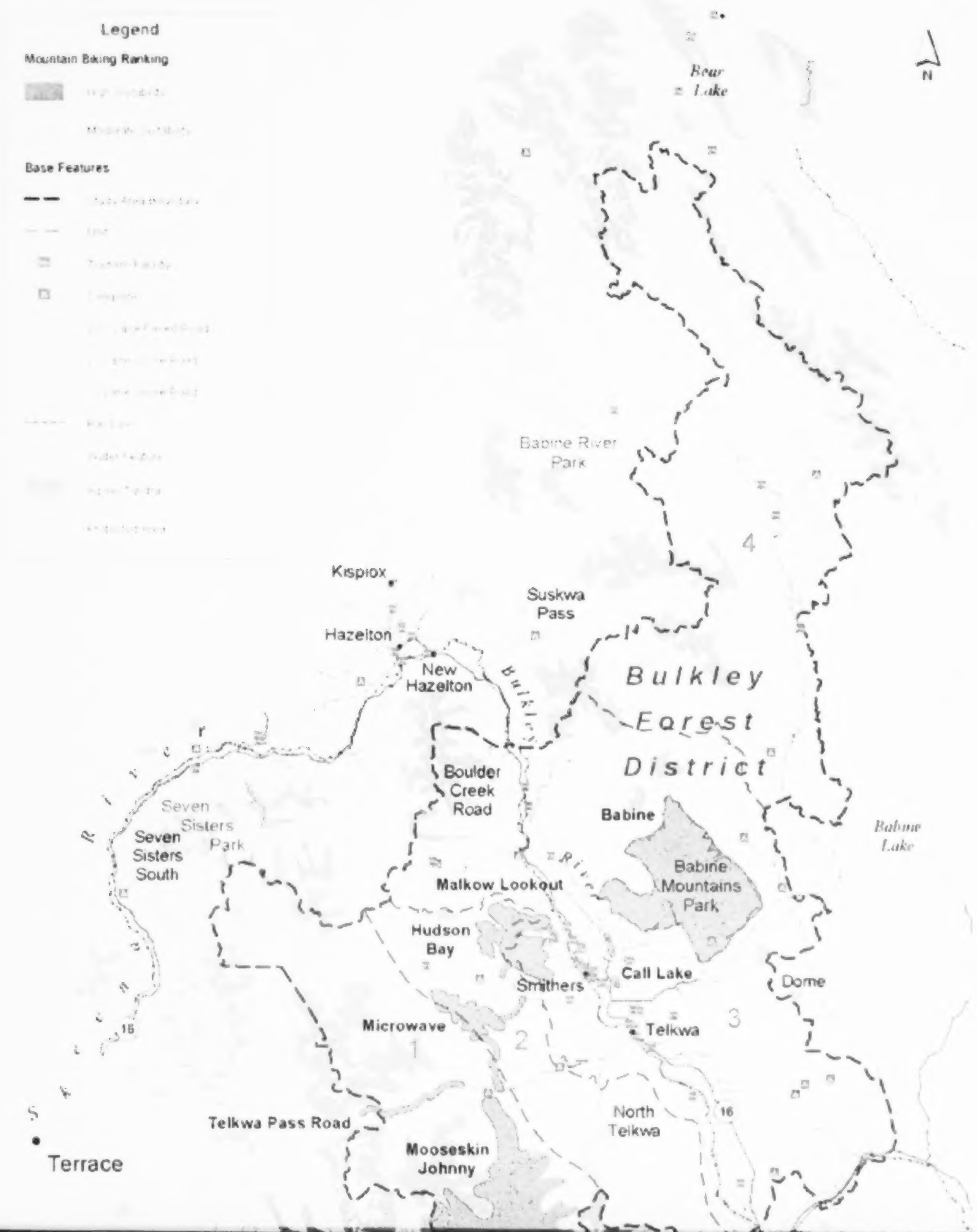
Polygons / Trails
Babine (Incl Onion Mt. road)
Hudson Bay
Microwave
Mooseskin Johnny
Telkwa Pass Road
Malkow Lookout & Call Lake

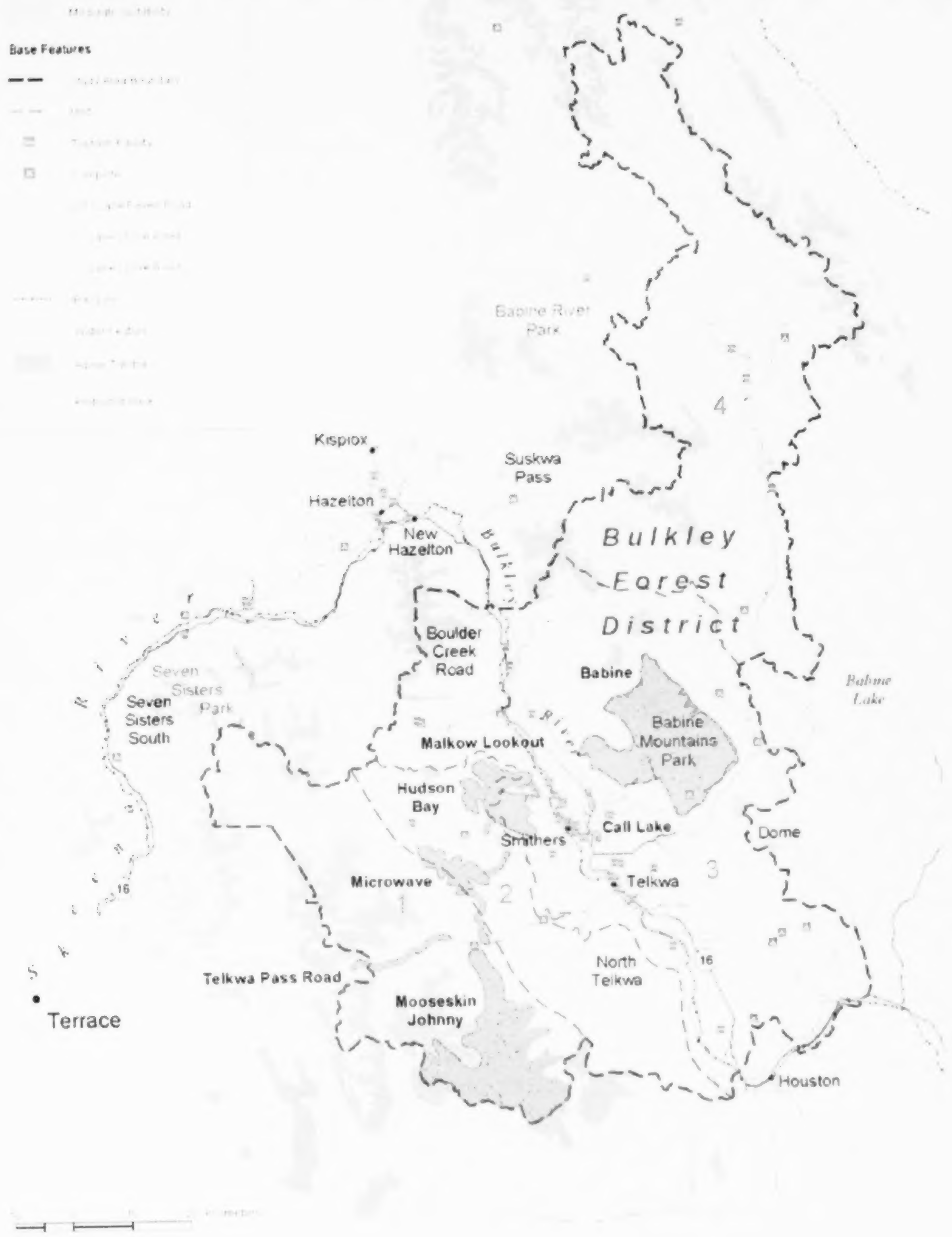
7.4.6 Mountain Biking – Suitability Map

On the following page is the tourism suitability map for the Mountain Biking product (Exhibit 29).

Bulkley Tourism Opportunity Study

Mountain Biking Suitability


Legend
Mountain Biking Ranking
High Suitability
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Study Area Boundary
Tourism Facility
Campsite
Rail Line
Water Feature
Alpine Tundra
Protected Area
N
Bear Lake
Babine River Park
4
Kispiox
Suskwa Pass
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Bulkley Forest District
River
Seven Sisters Park
Seven Sisters South
Boulder Creek Road
Babine
Babine Mountains Park
Babine Lake
Malkow Lookout
River
Hudson Bay
Call Lake
Smithers
Dome
Microwave
1
2
Telkwa
3
16
Skeena River
Telkwa Pass Road
North Telkwa
16
Mooseskin Johnny
Terrace


Base Features
Unit
Campsite
Kispiox
Suskwa Pass
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Babine River Park
Bulkley
River
Bulkley Forest District
4
Skeena River
Boulder Creek Road
Seven Sisters Park
Seven Sisters South
Babine
Babine Lake
Babine Mountains Park
Malkow Lookout
Hudson Bay
Call Lake
Smithers
Dome
Telkwa
3
Microwave
1
2
16
Telkwa Pass Road
North Telkwa
Mooseskin Johnny
Terrace
Houston

7.5 Mountaineering

7.5.1 Description

Ski Mountaineering and mountaineering is about climbing mountains. It is "more than climbing, panoramic views and wilderness experience. It is also a challenge, risk, and hardship"[66]. It requires knowledge in the tools and techniques of camping, navigation, belaying, rappelling, glacier travel, safety, rescue, and climbing on rock, snow and ice. Ski mountaineering is not limited to the winter. Areas that are suitable for this activity during the non-winter months are those areas with extensive icefields and glaciers, requiring the use of skis when traversing these areas. These sections of high country require knowledge of winter camping and travel and excellent physical stamina to meet the challenges.

Associated to mountaineering is *rock climbing*. A localized activity it takes place on the rock faces of boulders and big walls. It shares the knowledge of the tools and techniques of mountaineering with a focus on climbing rock either through "freestyle" or with ropes.

7.5.2 Regional Overview

Strengths	Challenging recreation features close to staging areas suitable for a range of mountaineering skill levels.
Weaknesses	Provincially repeatable features and corresponding opportunities. Attracting non-regional clients is made more difficult with high air fares, the area is not well known in the mountaineering community
Concerns	Lack of community support. Remote/undisturbed areas essential for wilderness type experience are decreasing in area as industrial logging continues

7.5.3 Resource Assessment

Ski Mountaineering and mountaineering: A number of the mountain ranges in the Study Area provide prime mountaineering. The rugged peaks with glaciers, glaciated cirques, matterhorns, solid rock cliffs and steep slopes offer a variety of challenges to the mountaineer and where the rock is suitable, to the rock climber.

Ski mountaineering is also addressed in the Ski touring product as part of backcountry ski touring.

Suitable mountain ranges for mountaineering, ski mountaineering and rock climbing include:

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[66] From *Mountaineering: the freedom of the hills* p. 14

WESTERN UNIT		Suitability
Ashman Ranges	**General Description:** Extensive snow with a variety of terrain from rolling ridges to jagged peaks and steep slopes. **Comments:** Most suitable for *ski mountaineering*	**H**
Sinclair Range	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, cirque basins, alpine, subalpine, glacier. **Comments:** Suitable for *mountaineering*.	**H**
Howson Range	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with extensive ridges with rolling alpine and sub-alpine, jagged peaks, steep slopes (limited to valleys) and with extensive snow and glaciers. **Comments:** Suitable for *Mountaineering, Ski mountaineering and Rock climbing*. The Howson Range is significant and can be promoted. Grouping of features including numerous glaciers, the Burnie Lakes, jagged peaks and remoteness al lend to it's uniqueness in the region.	**H**
Mt Sir Robert	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, cirque basins, alpine, subalpine, glacier. **Comments:** Suitable for *mountaineering*.	**H**
BULKLEY VALLEY AND ADJOINING RANGES UNIT		
Rocher Deboule Range	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, small glacier, many cirque basins. **Comments:** Demanding terrain, suitable for *rock climbing, advanced mountaineering* and poor for ski touring.	**M**
Seaton Blunt Range	**General Description:** Many rugged cirque talus basins, sharp ridges and gendarmes. **Comments:** Suitable for *rock climbing*, some potential for *winter ski mountaineering. Excellent ski touring areas.*	**M**
Hudson Bay Range	**General Description:** Dramatic peak and glaciers, cirque basins **Comments:** Suitable for *mountaineering*. The proximity of significant areas to communities allows for accessible training in mountaineering principles	**H**
NORTHEAST UNIT		
Sicintine Range	**General Description:** Remote dramatic landscape with extensive ridges with rolling alpine and sub-alpine, jagged peaks, steep slopes (limited to valleys), glacier. **Comments:**. Easy to get around and suitable for *ski mountaineering*. Avalanche hazards in the valleys. The Sicintine Range provides tremendous opportunities for a true backcountry experience	**H**
Bait Ranges	**General Description:** Remote range, southern half sawtooth ranges, glaciers to the east side of range, northern half rocky ridges, cirque basins and small lakes. **Comments:** Suitable for *ski mountaineering*.	**M**

7.5.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.5.4.1 MARKETS

The most recent data available on commercial recreation clients has lumped mountaineering and rock climbing as a single market. Canadian commercial operators have found that participants in these activities are generally younger males (approximately two thirds are males younger than 34), mostly from Canada (84%) and the US (12.7%), and travelling solo. By and large, this is not a family-oriented or group activity.[67]

The US data reflects the Canadian experience. Fully one third of all participants are between the age of 16 and 24.[68] Traditional rock climbing tends to be more popular than alpine mountaineering, which attracts 45% of all participants to this sport.[69] Alpine mountaineering and other forms of climbing are not mutually exclusive recreation categories. Many activities overlap and participants will regularly undertake more than one activity on a trip.

For climbing and mountaineering it is important to understand the different market segments because they can be quite different in terms of product preference. The following market segments are based on two primary characteristics, the number of times a year participated in the activity, and the level of personal risk sought from the activity. The **enthusiast** has been defined as the most active one-third participants by number of times they participate in the activity. By this definition, they are more likely to provide opportunities for repeat business for tour operators, but at the same time, more experienced enthusiasts are more inclined to set out on their own. If using a guide, they will look for technical instruction and the experience and ability to make difficult, well-informed decisions. Enthusiasts also go on longer trips – while they number approximately one-third of participants, they account for 74 percent of days spent mountaineering[70]. They often desire a natural, less-catered experience which includes less comfortable shelter such as tents and less dependence on mechanical support. These participants are generally younger, outdoors enthusiasts[71]. This group may also include the **risk seeker** who participates in mountaineering and climbing as a way to encounter situations where there is significant uncertainty bringing about the potential for danger or failure.

Participants, on the other hand, are looking to focus on the physical and mental challenge, as opposed to develop technical expertise in areas such as knot-tying. Participants are using guides as a way of gaining access to an activity they do not conceive of being able to do on their own. They are looking for the guide to ensure their safety and reduce the risk of the activity and the need to go through a steep learning curve to perform the activity. In many cases, participants see this activity as a one-time experience, although sometimes the enjoyment of the experience may result in participants looking to become enthusiasts. Participants generally do not do as much research before arriving at the destination, relying instead on the operator to have this information readily available. They are generally older (baby boomers), who are willing to pay for comfortable lodging and other amenities, while getting the feeling of personal challenge through an activity in the mountains.

There is extensive competition from well known international destinations such as the Alps, South America, the Pacific Northwest of North America and California for the climbing and mountaineering participant. Neither Canada nor BC have a significant share of the international or North American markets for climbing. Recent estimates of only 0.2% of the North American market for climbing shows just how far Canadian operators have to go in attracting more business. Even on a regional basis, the Bulkley would have to be considered a secondary destination behind the Canadian Rockies, Squamish and Skaha (for climbing) areas both of which draw from short-haul markets in the Pacific Northwest. Many other areas have much more advanced infrastructure, products and marketing programs geared toward hard and soft demanding mountaineers and climbers. Importantly, the absence of a hut system is a disadvantage for the mountaineering product.

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[67] Adventure Travel and Ecotourism in Canada: Strategic Framework for Development, p.3-31, The Randolph Group, January 1997.

[68] Human Powered Outdoor Recreation, State of the Industry Report, Outdoor Recreation Council of America, 1997.

[69] ORCA Outdoor Industry Distribution Study, Leisure Trends Group, 1997.

[70] Human Powered Outdoor Recreation, State of the Industry Report, Outdoor Recreation Council of America, 1997.

[71] The Sea to Sky CBR Opportunities Study, p.46.

7.5.4.2 IMPACTS/CONFLICTS

Conflicts with other users are not common as the terrain is quite specific to this activity. However, resource extraction (logging) nearby can be a visual and aesthetic deterrent to participants. Rock climbing can be focused on relatively small activity areas where conflicts with other users are likely to be minimal.

7.5.4.3 *BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT*

Commercial mountaineering operators require access to the high alpine in the summer where conflicts with the forest industry and other recreation users will be at a minimum. The identification and use of preferred sites on a regular basis will require CR tenure. In order to assure a quality trip experience, operators may require several locations so they can react to constantly changing weather and safety conditions.

Mountaineering also requires a lot of technical (and expensive) equipment. Personal gear is usually supplied by the participants, but tents, cooking gear, food and safety equipment are the responsibility of the operator or guide. Self-contained camps are common, but a well-located alpine or sub-alpine hut is a definite advantage for expeditions. Base operations with proximity to transportation (helicopter or vehicle) are also required. Accommodation and food services are often necessary at the beginning and end of trips. Qualified guides and instructors are prerequisite for commercial participation in this activity. A climbing gym or easily accessible climbing area for training and instructions can be an advantage. The absence of a hut system in the region is a disadvantage.

Rockclimbing requires little in the way of infrastructure and would be less dependent on CR tenure. Some benefits may be gained by having good access trails, and toilet facilities for the more heavily used areas. A survey of rockclimbing visitors in Squamish indicated that basic infrastructure were at the top of the list of climber needs. Improving washroom facilities, clean drinking water, garbage disposal, camping and shower facilities, parking, firewood, signage and visitor information were suggested as ways of improving the area.[72]

Because of the risk inherent in both climbing and mountaineering, commercial operators must emphasize safety and being able to gauge ability and energy level of each customer. This means hiring experienced guides/instructors with certification in climbing, first aid, medical and leadership training, selecting routes appropriate for customers that provide challenge without undue risk and establishing rules and procedures for behaviour and decision-making during the trip.

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[72] Economic Impact of Rockclimbing and Windsurfing, Sea to Sky Economic Development Commission & Festivals BC, Summer 1992.

7.5.4.4 *OVERALL POTENTIAL*

There has been a significant increase in the popularity of indoor climbing. In 1996, 71 percent of Climbing Magazine readers reported to be participating in indoor climbing.[73] This will result in increasing popularity of sport climbing and bouldering. Operators in these activity areas will need to deal with overconfidence or lack of technical skill for those climbers moving from indoor to outdoor climbing.

There is potential to expand the rock climbing product in the Bulkley. Providing more teaching and instruction is one of the best ways to create more appeal for this product locally among participants and enthusiasts. A good model for development may be Yamnuska Inc., a mountaineering school and guiding service based in Canmore, Alberta. They provide beginner to advanced courses in mountaineering, rock and ice climbing. More advanced courses are also available.

One sub-market that has expanded rapidly in the US and Canada is that of corporate climbing. Organizations such as Venture Up have built a sizeable commercial business catering to large corporations which use climbing for team building and experiential learning.

Mountaineers value unspoiled, unpolluted and uncrowded mountain wilderness, which explains the concentration of activity in the national and provincial park systems. The Bulkley can boast the wilderness experience and some well known parks but the lack of a hut system will limit the potential. The hut product is closely associated with the development of multi-day products. Huts are the major alternative to camping and are a familiar accompaniment among European participants. The majority of the hut system in the Rockies is run by the Alpine Club of Canada (ACC) or by BC Parks. One major advantage of a hut system is that it would increase the appeal of this product to participants in the soft adventure market.

Mountaineering has been made more accessible through the use of helicopters, snowmobiles and glacier ski planes. Operators can appeal to the softer adventure market by using motorized transportation and superior accommodation facilities to offset trip durations and safety concerns. This is what heli-ski operators have done to create summer capacity for their facilities. In catering to the soft adventure participant and emphasizing the comforts of lodges and gourmet meals, clients are given the opportunity to "experience" the mountains and the thrill of summiting, without having to learn the hard, technical skills of mountaineering and climbing.

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[73] Climbing Magazine Reader Survey, 1996.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA				
UNITS:		**Bulkley**	**Western**	**Northeast**
Markets	Demand	**Low-Medium**: small market but growing in some areas, especially among soft adventurers.		
	Competition	**Medium**: southwest BC, Canadian Rockies, Pacific Northwest. Many areas with more advanced development.		
	Overall potential	**Medium**: variety of features, close-in access, staging area for Northwest.		**Low**: lack of alpine areas.
Impact/ Conflict	Use	**Low**: one commercial operator servicing the entire Northwest region.		
	Community/Social	**Low**: remote activity, rarely interacts with other uses.		
Business Develop-ment Needs	Crown tenure	**High**: high value markets require certainty of access and quality experience.		
	Infrastructure	**Low**: mountaineering emphasis is on wilderness experience; close-in climbing will require some basic amenities.		
	Capital	**Medium:** camping/cooking gear, safety equipment, base camp, maybe hut or lodge, well-trained guides.		
Level of community support		**Medium**: some packaging, joint marketing in Smithers/Telkwa.		**Low**: low priority and capacity.
Employment opportunities		**Medium**: business development will increase need for seasonal guides.		
Opportunities		▸ Mountaineering school ▸ Commercial climbing wall or gym ▸ Huts or hut system for a mountaineering tour(s)		▸ N/A

7.5.5 High Opportunity Areas

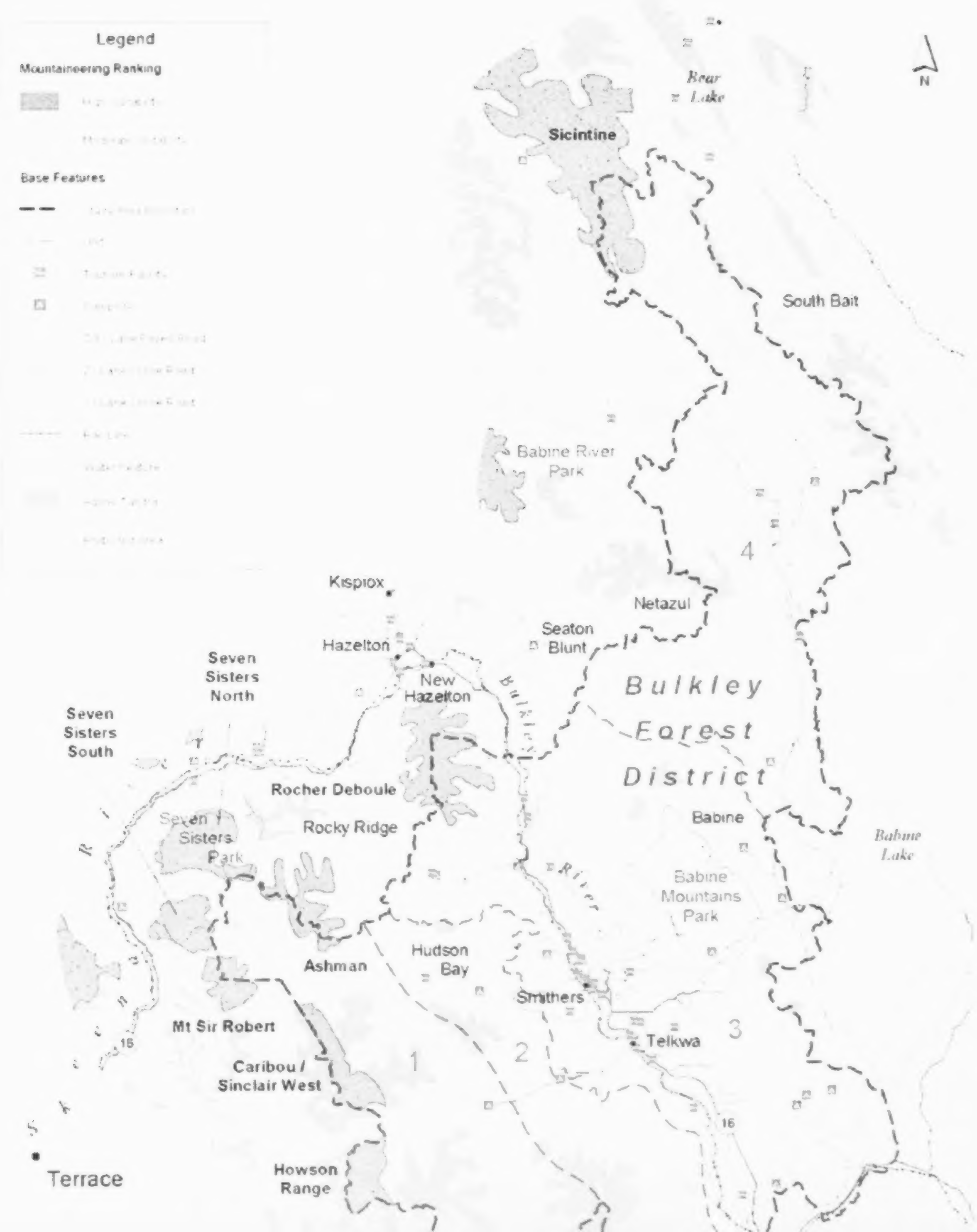
Polygons / Trails
Ashman
Sinclair
Howson Range
Sicintine
Mt Sir Robert & surrounding ridges
Hudson Bay Range

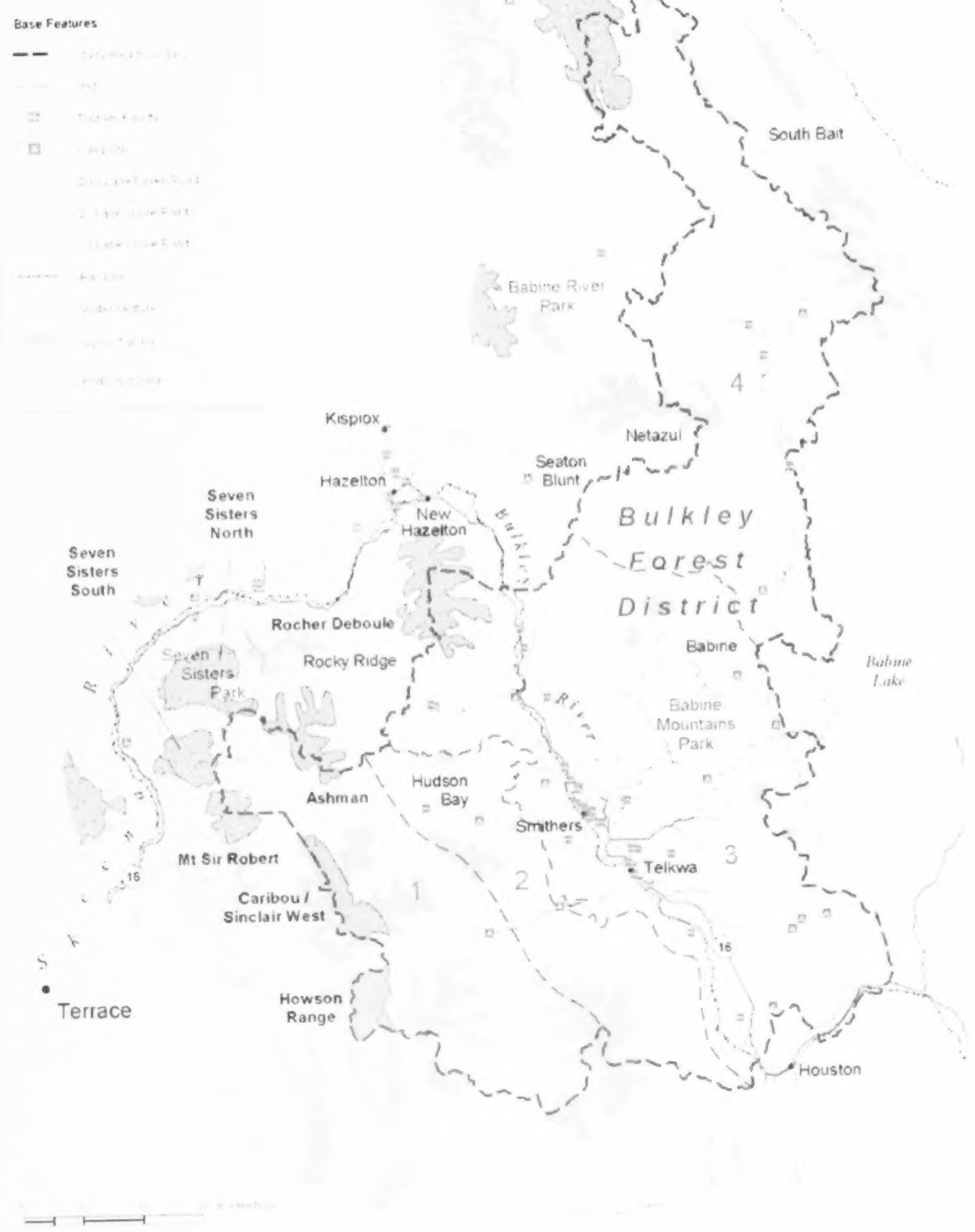
7.5.6 Mountaineering – Suitability Map

On the following page is the tourism suitability map for the Mountaineering product (Exhibit 30).

Bulkley Tourism Opportunity Study

Mountaineering Suitability


Legend
Mountaineering Ranking
Base Features
N
Bear Lake
Sicintine
South Bait
Babine River Park
4
Kispiox
Netazul
Seaton Blunt
Hazelton
Seven Sisters North
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Bulkley Forest District
Seven Sisters South
Rocher Deboule
Rocky Ridge
Seven Sisters Park
Babine
Babine Lake
River
Babine Mountains Park
Ashman
Hudson Bay
Smithers
Telkwa
3
Mt Sir Robert
16
Caribou / Sinclair West
1
2
16
Terrace
Howson Range


Base Features
South Bait
Babine River Park
4
Kispiox
Netazul
Seaton Blunt
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Seven Sisters North
Bulkley Forest District
Seven Sisters South
Bulkley
Rocher Deboule
Babine
Babine Lake
Seven Sisters Park
Rocky Ridge
River
Babine Mountains Park
Skeena River
Hudson Bay
Ashman
Smithers
3
Telkwa
Mt Sir Robert
16
Caribou / Sinclair West
1
2
16
Terrace
Howson Range
Houston

7.6 Nature Observation/Heritage Interpretation

7.6.1 Description

The viewing of heritage, culture, wildlife and nature in general are principal components of ecotourism (low impact, non-consumptive tourism). As growth of the ecotourism industry continues, the region can benefit through increased marketing of their significant assets and developing further infrastructure that meets the demand for a range of products, from rustic to full-service.

Heritage and cultural interpretation is focused on the First Nations that first settled the land as well as the successive groups of immigrants.

Wildlife observation is closely linked to the opportunity to view wildlife. This requires a level of reliability that ensures that the wildlife will be in a certain location. Wildlife observation includes the viewing of a variety of animals, from mammals, birds, and fish to reptiles. What contributes to the attraction of wildlife observation is: the uniqueness and rarity of the animal to be observed, exceptional numbers, romantic notions that build on an animals esteem, and the relationship of an animal to cultural and heritage interpretation.

Nature observation and interpretation is also general and focuses on the natural history of an area from the paleontology to the current. The forces of ice, snow, wind and rain on the landscape attract high levels of interest.

The culture, heritage and nature observation and interpretation product is significant as an associative product to many activities. Road tours, rafting, canoeing, air tours, hiking, and mountaineering all benefit by including this product into their program. Destination lodges can only benefit by diversifying the interests of their customers.

7.6.2 Regional Overview

Strengths	Varied cultural, historical, and natural features. Dramatic groupings of features. Presence of rare and unique wildlife.
Weaknesses	Unreliability of wildlife sightings. Limited cultural and historical interpretation. Lack of packaging into outdoor products.
Concerns	Carrying capacity and limits of acceptable change in some areas. Cooperation between First Nations, communities and tourism industry.

7.6.3 Resource Assessment

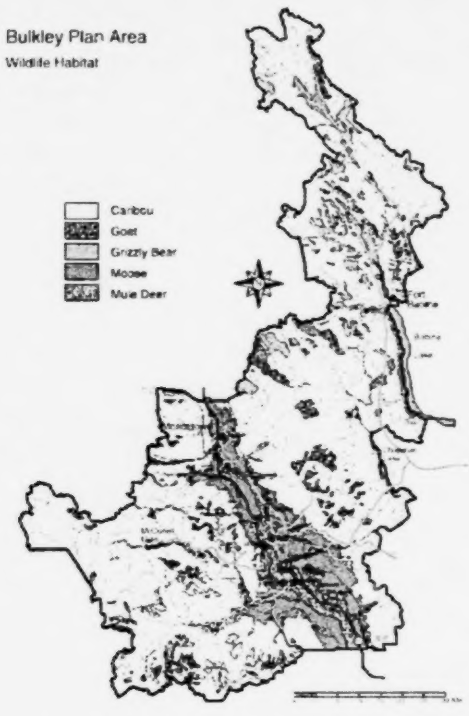
The Bulkley Region is rich in culture, heritage and natural attributes. Rugged ranges dominate the west, the u-shaped Bulkley Valley comprises the center and the rounded ridges of the Babine Range domintes the south west. The region extends northward through rolling terrain passing two isolated high ranges to the west and an arm of the large Babine Lake to the east. It continues past the wilderness of the Babine River to the marshes of the Nilkitkwa River and the high Scicintine and the Shelgyote ranges. Large mammals such as moose, bear, caribou, goats are common in areas. The rivers are rich in fish and the salmon run up the Bulkley draws the Wet'suwet'en First Nations to a narrow canyon where they hand gaff and net fish as they have for centuries.

7.6.3.1 NATURE

Nature observation in the Bulkley Region can focus on the elemental influences on the landscape, the prehistory, and the wildlife.

Elemental influences on the landscape - this region generally lies in the rain shadow of the Coast Mountains and the Hazelton Ranges. The weather is drier, warmer in the summers and cooler in the winters than locations to the west. Fluvial landforms along the river, glacio-fluvial landsforms to the east and glacial landforms to the west provide tremendous opportunity for interpretation. Babine Lake to the east is the largest natural lake in British Columbia.

Paleontology prehistory in the Bulkey Region can be detected in the Driftwood fossil beds (eocene fossils of insects, sequioa and fish) and Silvern Lakes(Belemites and brachiopods). Both are near Smithers.



Bulkley Land and Resource Management Plan 12

Wildlife in the region include the significant populations of:

- Grizzly bear in the Babine watershed, up to twenty grizzly bears fish for sockeye near the DFO fish weir, from mid-August onwards and are most often seen in early morning or late evening hours
- the isolated population of Mountain Caribou in the Telkwa Range and sections of the Bulkley Range,
- the Moose populations along the Bulkley River watershed, these are most often seen from mid to late winter as they are in the high country at other times,
- Mountain goat populations focused on the Netazul, Blunt, Goat, Babine, and North Telkwa Mountain and Ranges.
- Salmon runs most readily viewed along the Bulkley River particularly in Moricetown Canyon.
- The largest sockeye run on the Skeena system comes up the Babine River and tens if not hundreds of thousands may be seen below the DFO fish weir just below Nilkitkwa Lake in August

The wildlife as a rule are dispersed and not readily seen. There is a higher incidence of Grizzly bear viewing along the Babine River in the spring and during the salmon run. The population of Mountain Caribou has been substantially reduced in the recent decades and their preservation supercedes any relationship to recreation.

7.6.3.2 HERITAGE

The Bulkley Region was first settled by the Wet'suwet'en, the westernmost extent of the Athapaskan-speaking peoples (known in central BC as the Dakelh or Carrier). Wet'suwet'en land comprises more that 20 precisely defined House Territories represented by hereditary *deniize'yu.* Summer is the traditional time to gather for feasts to reiterate their laws and to re-enact their role of providing for their people. It is also a time to fish at the ancient sites of Tse Kya (Hagwilget) and Kyah Wiget (Moricetown)[74].

Kyah wiget (Moricetown) is 32 km west of Smithers and is the site of the Moricetown canyons where fish are gaffed in the rapids and netted in the eddies. The archaeological evidence of Kyah wiget is 4,000 years old. Structures have been built for centuries to aid in the catching of the fish. In the early 1900's, federal fisheries officers sought to end the fishery. Today the fishery is vibrant and can be readily observed from a turn off the highway. The Moricetown Band has plans to develop an Interpretive Centre, giftshop, interpretive trails and lodging in the Moricetown Canyon area. A proposal has been completed and funding is being pursued. There are many historical Wet'suwet'en trails in the study area, the ones through the valley bottoms have been largely obliterated by settlement and industrial development but remnants of more remote trails exist in some areas. Wet'suwet'en people are expressing interest in re-opening some of these trails for both their own cultural training and tourism.

To the northeast, the Nat'oot'ten, also an Athapaskan-speaking people live on the shore of Babine Lake. Their traditional livelihood was salmon and their society was built around salmon fishing weirs (a series of dams and baskets used to trap fish). Salmon was a major export with Fort Kilmaur and others purchasing dried salmon for export. By the early 1900's, federal fisheries raided Fort Babine to dismantle the weirs and this resulted in the Babine Barricade Dispute with the subsequent jailing of Nat'oot'en leaders and the destruction of a traditional way of life. Today, salmon enhancement projects and fishing provides a living as does the sale by local artists of leather products- moccasins, jackets and snowshoes, products they are well known for. The Nat'oot'ten people are working on opening an old trading trail between Fort Babine and Takla Lake to the east in the Ft St. James Forest District.

Gitxaan territories comprise 63 House territories, each precisely defined by streams and rivers and represented by hereditary *simgiget*, who are trained from childhood to care for the land. The territory extends into the northeast unit of the Bulkley Region. There are six villages - Gitwangak, Gitanyowm, Gitsegukla, Glen Vowell and Kispiox. All are located within the Kispiox Forest District and outside the study area.

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[74] Cheryk Coull, *An Travelers Guide to Aboriginal BC* p.169-170.

7.6.3.3 TRADE AND SETTLEMENT:

European *fur traders* were the first to come. Establishing forts, they traded blankets, metal utensils and guns for furs with the local First Nations. The traded directly with the Nat'oot'en for dried salmon, and with the Wet'suwet'en who in turn traded with the Gitxsan. The Gitxsan did not meet the newcomers in any great numbers until the creation of the *Collins Overhead Telegraph* which 1866 was to link North America to Europe via the Berring Strait. Linemen came and their supplies followed. The telegraph was soon made redundant by cable under the Atlantic, but by then the country was open and settlers, miners, missionaries and later road builders, fisheries officers and loggers followed. The Fort Babine to Hazelton Trail brought miners in increasing numbers.

Historical Structures – Evidence of the *Collins Overhead Telegraph trail* which closely follows pre-existing First Nations trails can be glimpsed in a few areas.

7.6.3.4 SUMMARY

The Western Unit is noted for the glaciated landscape with opportunities for viewing significant wildlife such as Mountain Caribou.

The Bulkley Unit is noted for the cultural heritage focus of the Wet'suwet'en and subsequent peoples, of wildlife viewing in association with culture and heritage, of paleolithic sites, and of nature interpretation associated with the fluvial and glaciated landscape.

The northeast unit is noted for the cultural heritage of the Nat'oot'en people and the wildlife values associated with the Babine watershed (with a focus on Grizzly bears).

Associated Products include road tours, summer trail products, boating, and destination lodges.

7.6.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.6.4.1 MARKETS

Nature observers are typically involved in watching, interpreting or photographing flora, geological or other natural resource features. Travellers with a cultural/historical interest are attracted to aboriginal culture as well as colonial and industrial heritage features. Each of these market segments vary in their demographic characteristics. While some data is available on the wildlife viewing and nature observer markets, little is known about cultural/historical travellers.

Nature observers and wildlife viewers tend to be baby boomers in the 35-55 years bracket, evenly distributed between women and men. However, nature observers are more likely to travel solo or be on business than other adventure travellers. Wildlife viewers travel extensively as couples or families.

Among tourism operators, the Canadian market represents approximately half of both the nature observation and wildlife viewing participants. The US is a very important market for these activities as well. In fact, nature observation (51%) and whale watching (30%) are among the activities with the highest percentage of American visitors. The German market is also important to the "Other Wildlife Viewing" segment, primarily through their interest in bear viewing.

According to a 1994 study[75], the aboriginal cultural tourist is between 25 and 55 years of age, relatively affluent and has higher levels of education. In general, the further a visitor came from, the more likely they were to visit First Nations attractions, as shown by the high percentage of visitors from Europe, long-haul US and Eastern Canada. Europeans, particularly Germans, and Japanese tourists have shown a high degree of interest in Canada's First Nations people.

BC has very good marketability and international renown for wildlife viewing, nature observation and native cultural viewing. But competition within the province is quite extensive. Some of the major wildlife viewing sub-products with a high level of appeal (e.g. salmon, grizzly bears, eagles) are present in the area but not always in high enough numbers. The competition for the cultural/historical participant is also growing. 'Ksan was one of the earliest and more successful attempts at First Nations interpretation but many native communities around the province and indeed North America have been developing their tourism capabilities. In Alberta, especially, the investment in interpretation infrastructure both in the national parks and other facilities (Tyrell Museum, Frank Slide Interpretive Centre, Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump) has drawn high market volumes.

7.6.4.2 ISSUES/CONFLICTS

Some wildlife viewing may potentially conflict with hunting activity. The region is a prime hunting area and the best site for wildlife viewing may overlap with those most suitable for hunting. In other areas of the province, bear viewing in particular generates frequent clashes with hunting interests. Such events can be very damaging to the visitor experience and jeopardize market and product development.

Some areas have also developed into ecological "hotspots" where confrontations between various user groups and environmental concerns are not uncommon. The Babine River corridor is an example. This increased profile can have both positive and negative implications.

There is a potential conflict between increasing accessibility to native culture and maintaining authenticity of the product and respect the First Nation's request for privacy. Locally-based solutions and productive partnerships between First Nations and the tourism industry is essential.

7.6.4.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Unless it was associated with lodge or resort development, it is unlikely that tenure would be required for this product, and only then if the operator developed his own infrastructure and services. It is likely that any First Nations interpretation would require cooperation with and possibly permission from the First Nations group involved. A Licence of Occupation from BCAL for trail or campsite development or park use permit for guiding within park boundaries may be required.

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[75] Aboriginal Culture Tourism: The Market, Bernard Campbell, 1994.

Infrastructure is a very important consideration, both for wildlife viewing or heritage interpretation. For viewing, the requirements will vary depending on the wildlife/natural history viewing activity and the number of visitors. Whether wildlife viewing, nature observation or heritage interpretation, trails, viewing platforms and interpretive signage/displays will improve the visitor experience and create opportunities for further product development.

For wildlife viewing, access and reliability of viewing are key components. Shifting populations and the transient nature of some species creates unpredictability in viewing and increases business risk.

The incorporation of this product into other outdoor products will depend on the availability of interpretative facilities, services and programming (e.g. festivals). This especially true of any First Nations interpretation. Developing partnerships with First Nations for more tourism interpretation can leverage these resources in the region. This cannot be done inexpensively – there will be significant requirements for capital investments and development of human resources. On the positive side, further development, especially if it is tied to new facilities, has the potential to generate above-average job and income benefits.

7.6.4.4 OVERALL POTENTIAL

The overall potential for the development of this product in the Bulkley is very good, primarily in the areas of First Nations interpretation. Higher levels of interpretation and alternate programming will have to be undertaken to expand the appeal to already busy touring travellers. Survey data indicates that educational trips are a growing attractant for this group of travellers.[76]

The future demand for all aspects of this product will continue to grow and evolve as increased infrastructure, interpretation and operator expertise bring new and interesting sub-products to market. Demographic trends, including increasing education levels among travellers and the demand for more learning and participative experiences, will favour communities that have made the investment in facility and product development.

The further visitors travel to their final destination, the more likely they are to purchase guided interpretive products, and the more likely they are to have an interest in First Nations culture. With high levels of visitation from long-haul markets, the region has the opportunity to deliver more interpretation to existing travel markets. First Nations participation in the development of such products is essential, but steps will have to be taken to encourage more joint ventures and business partnerships.

The study area offers some unique opportunities in general nature tours, First Nations interpretation, and to a lesser extent, wildlife viewing. First Nations interpretation has potential to offer a complementary experience to other, primary products. Also of interest to travel markets are the viewing opportunities related to other natural resources in the study area, including glaciers, alpine areas and parks/protected areas.

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[76] Ecotourism – Nature/Adventure/Culture: Alberta and British Columbia Market Demand Assessment Travel Trade Survey Results, HLA Consultants and The ARA Consulting Group, 1995.

Heritage interpretation and development has many implications for First Nations communities in Fort Babine and Moricetown. It is not just a tourism issue. There will be issues about cultural sensitivities, sacred sites and sustainability that have to be addressed before heritage tourism can proceed. A clearly articulated and applied heritage resource policy may have to be brought forward by local bands. Without it, heritage development will be a piecemeal process and may lead to unintended consequences for tourism and for the communities involved.

In addition there will be a need for a coordinated effort amongst tourism operators and the First Nations people to ensure that aboriginal tourism is developed in such a way as to effectively promote their culture in an interesting, yet sensitive, manner. Tourism BC has signed an accord with the Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC to help develop and promote aboriginal tourism in the province. The association is also developing an accreditation program to ensure quality standards amongst aboriginal tourism businesses.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA

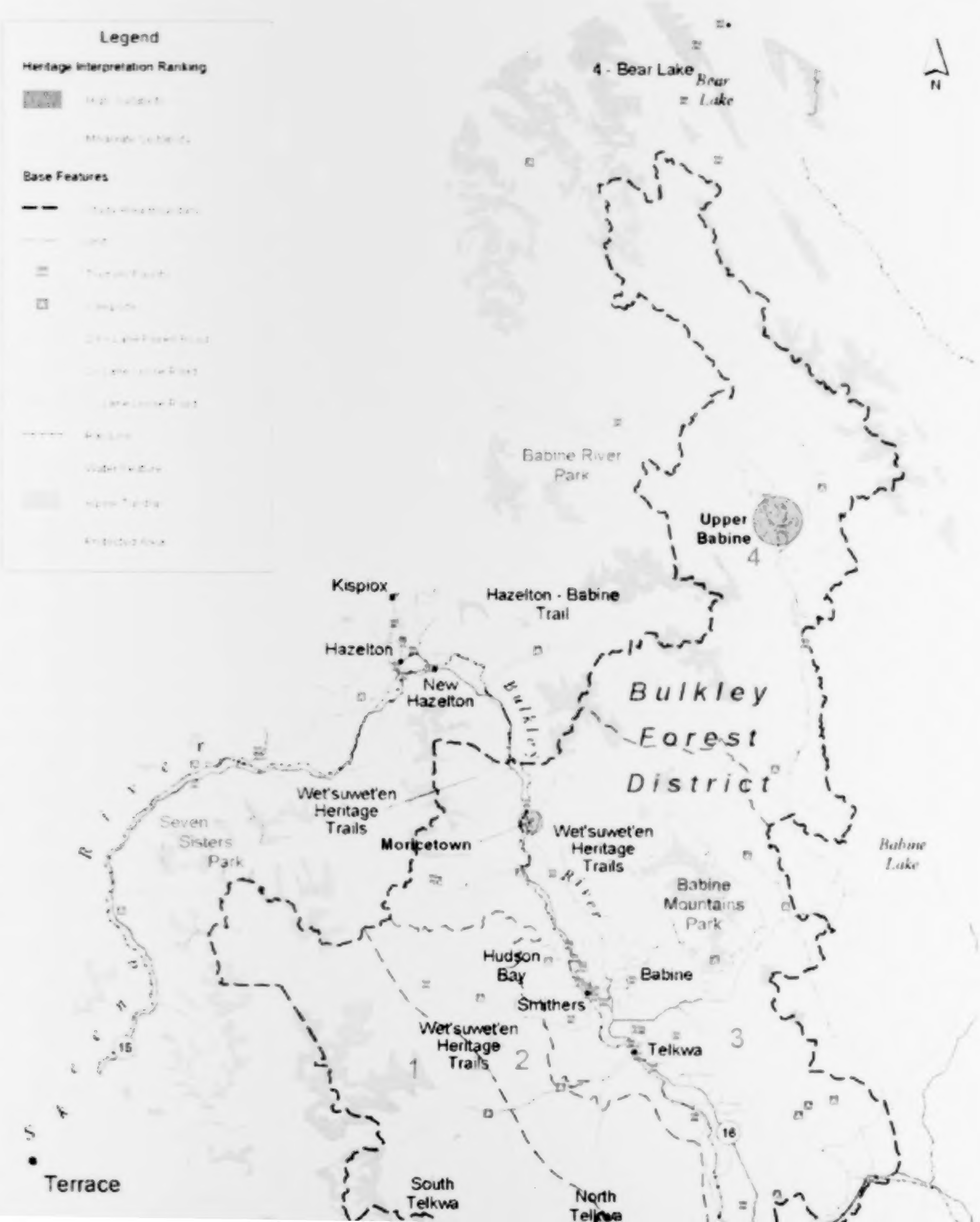
UNITS:		Bulkley	Western	Northeast
Markets	Demand	**High**: very high interest and participation levels amongst all geographic markets		
	Competition	**High**: major focus of most tourism regions; increasing interpretive investments being in BC and Alberta		
	Overall potential	**High**: excellent diversity of close-in features & aboriginal culture		**Medium**: potential focused on the Babine River
Impact/ Conflict	Use	**Medium**: minor concerns with high use resources such as the major rivers, perhaps some capacity concerns on the Babine		
	Community/Social	**Medium**: policies and protocols for access to or use of sensitive First Nations sites should be accounted for		
Business Development Needs	Crown tenure	**Medium**: required for repeated commercial usage or permanent structures. First Nations can utilize IR lands		
	infrastructure	**High**: investments in public and private infrastructure		**High**: investments in public and private infrastructure
	Capital	**Medium-High**: can range from simple viewing platforms or trail upgrades to capital-intensive interpretive centres		
Level of community support		**High**: excellent match with community and First Nations' development needs		
Employment opportunities		**Medium-High**: project development could create a variety of interpreter, guide, hospitality and other service jobs		
Opportunities		▸ Link with river and trail based products ▸ Cultural viewing ▸ Water-based interpretive tours (e.g. linking Tyhee, Seymour, Round, and Kathlyn lakes, Bulkley River, and Moricetown Falls) ▸ Multi-activity tours combined key recreational features (e.g. waterfalls, wildlife, glaciers, alpine lakes, fossil beds, old mill and mine sites, mining trails and interpretive trails at the Smithers Community Forest. ▸ Aboriginal Cultural Stewardship Program (for training interpreters) ▸ Joint ventures and partnerships between First Nations and tourism operators ▸ IR site and interpretive centre development (Moricetown)		▸ Cultural viewing and interpretive tours in Fort Babine and historical sites along Babine Lake ▸ IR site and facility development in Fort Babine. ▸ Linkages with lodge/resorts and wildlife viewing.

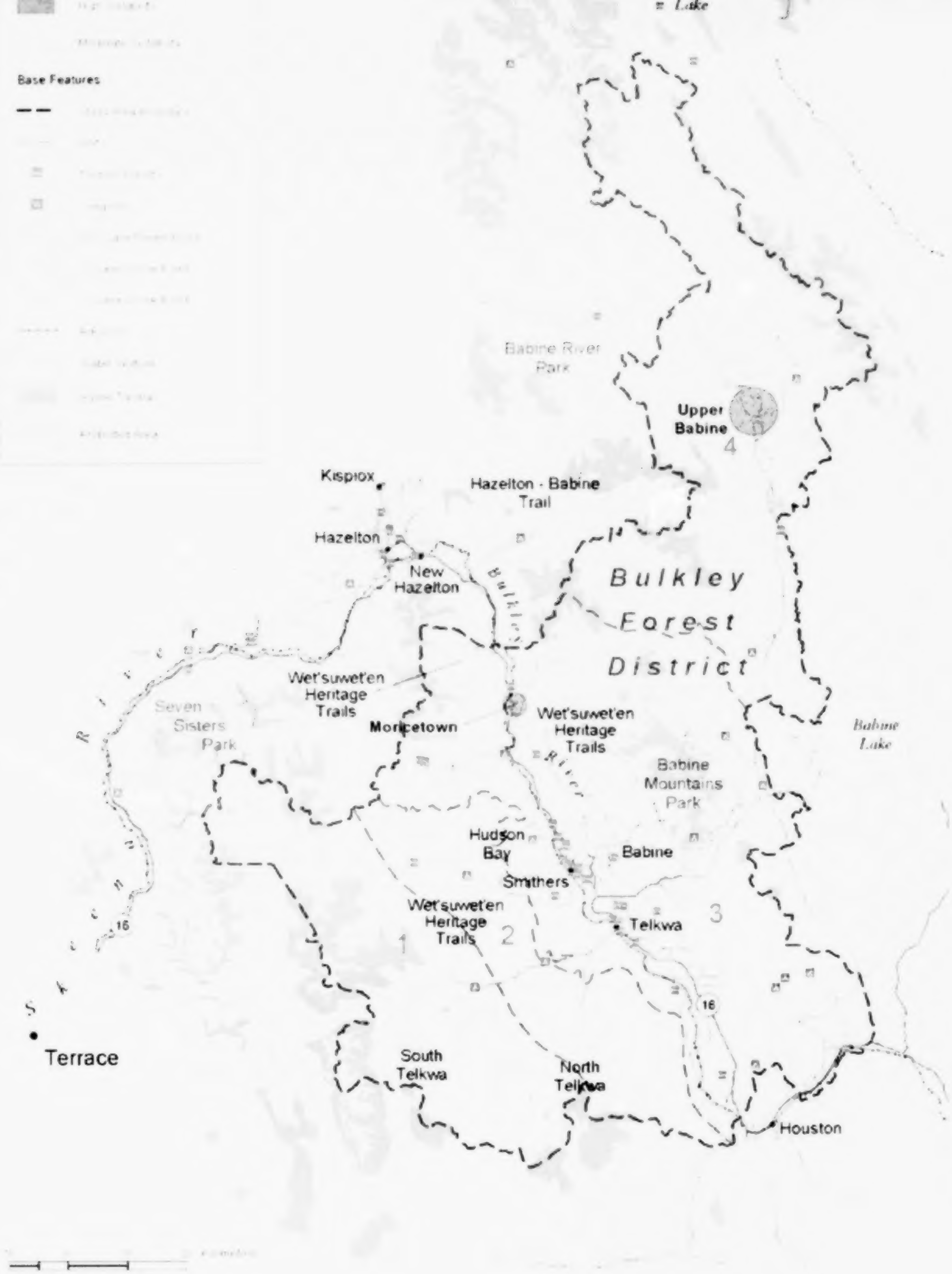
7.6.5 Cultural Heritage Interpretation – Suitability Map

On the following page is the tourism suitability map for the Cultural Heritage Interpretation product (Exhibit 31).

Bulkley Tourism Opportunity Study

Cultural Heritage Interpretation Suitability


Legend
Heritage Interpretation Ranking
High Suitability
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Tourism Facility
Campsite
Rail Line
Water Feature
Alpine Tundra
Protected Area
N
4 - Bear Lake
Bear Lake
Babine River Park
Upper Babine
4
Kispiox
Hazelton - Babine Trail
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Bulkley Forest District
Wet'suwet'en Heritage Trails
Moricetown
Wet'suwet'en Heritage Trails
Seven Sisters Park
River
Skeena River
Babine Lake
Babine Mountains Park
Hudson Bay
Babine
Smithers
Wet'suwet'en Heritage Trails
1
2
3
Telkwa
15
16
Terrace
South Telkwa
North Telkwa


Base Features
Lake
Babine River Park
Upper Babine
4
Kispiox
Hazelton - Babine Trail
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Bulkley Forest District
Skeena River
Seven Sisters Park
Wet'suwet'en Heritage Trails
Moricetown
Wet'suwet'en Heritage Trails
River
Babine Lake
Babine Mountains Park
Hudson Bay
Babine
Smithers
Telkwa
3
16
Wet'suwet'en Heritage Trails
1
2
16
Terrace
South Telkwa
North Telkwa
Houston

7.7 Nordic Skiing/Ski Touring

7.7.1 Description

There are three general types of nordic skiing. Cross-country skiing is undertaken on trails that are groomed for skating (wide compressed corridor) or classic skiing (parallel tracks for skis). Light-touring usually involves creating one's own tracks using a medium width ski on excursions of less than one day. Backcountry ski touring involves multi-day trips/excursions of varying lengths to backcountry areas, frequently with varying terrain, usually in alpine areas. Both light touring and backcountry ski touring can involve telemark skiing – free-heeled downhill skiing. For backcountry skiing, a premium is placed on pristine wilderness and lack of motorized vehicles. Downhill skiing utilizes lifts, helicopters and snowcats to access the elevations required to ski downhill unencumbered.

7.7.2 Regional Overview

Strengths	Quick access to open alpine. Quality scenic features. Relatively long season (5-6 months). Dry snow conditions. Loop trail networks near towns. Infrastructure to support activity. Local ski guide and avalanche training capability
Weaknesses	Variable winter road conditions to many backcountry trailheads. Medium to high avalanche hazards.
Concerns	Shortage of public sector funding to develop and maintain trails. Potential competition/conflicts in areas accessible to snowmobilers.

7.7.3 Resource Assessment

The Bulkley Study Area is well suited for the skiing. The variety of terrain including open sub-alpine and alpine ridges and bowls, glaciers, icefields, meadows, the availability of suitable trails and old mining roads, and the well-developed and maintained nordic ski trails; establishes the Bulkley Study Area as an attractive region for the nordic skiing/ ski tour product. Optimal snowfall and ready access to communities enhance the product viability in the Northwest region.

7.7.3.1 CROSS COUNTRY SKIING

Cross country skiing requires the infrastructure and maintained grooming. It is generally associated with clubs and communities. In the study area these include the:

Name	General Description
WESTERN UNIT and NORTHWEST UNIT	
→	Distances from communities limit the opportunity.
BULKLEY VALLEY AND ADJOINING RANGES UNIT	
Harold Price	*Harold Price Trail* - leads to a cabin in a valley.
Babine Range	*Moricetown/Cronin trail-* A hiking and ski trail leads to a cabin. Scenic views.
Hudson Bay Mt.	*Smithers Community Forest* - Chris Dale Ski Trails provide a variety of racing and touring ski trails in the moderate to difficult range. Trails are marked and groomed. Modern Lodge, night skiing

Name	General Description
Smithers Golf Course	*Smithers Golf course*- Trails around the golf course provide opportunities close to Smithers.
Howsons Hut	25 - 30 km of track skiing adjacent to McDowell Lake. Commercial venture.
Canyon Creek	Cross country ski trails of moderate difficulty. 5km.
McDonnel Lake	Moderate ski.

7.7.3.2 SKI TOURING

Light touring utilizes locations that can be readily accessed from the population centers and are moderately difficult or technical. Winter road conditions (are the roads plowed? Is there industrial traffic? Are they wide enough to allow safe passing of oncoming traffic?) and the presence of snowmobiles are potential limitations.

Backcountry Ski Touring is generally a multi-day excursion and requires an advanced skill level, knowledge of winter camping and excellent physical stamina to meet the challenges of the backcountry in winter.

WESTERN UNIT		Suitability
This unit is most suited for the backcountry ski product. Significant features include the Howson Range and South Telkwa. Air access may increase the opportunity.		
Mount Sir Robert Range	**General Description:** Steep slopes and jagged peaks with glaciers and sub-alpine bowls. **Primary Routes:** nil **Type of Ski Tour Products:** Ski mountaineering. **Comments:** Remote location. Poor access makes this a backcountry product. Steep slopes make this suitable primarily for ski mountaineering thereby limiting opportunities. **Other winter activities:** Snowmobiling.	L
Ashman Ridge	**General Description:** Extensive snow with a variety of terrain from rolling ridges to jagged peaks and steep slopes. **Primary Routes:** Access from Kispiox. **Type of Trail Products:** Backcountry ski touring, ski mountaineering. **Comments:** Relatively short access to alpine, early spring access because south facing Can be good telemarking through trees, a non-motorized area, road plowing can be an issue **Other winter activities:** nil	H
Caribou	**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine. Small glacier and lakes. Jagged peaks to the west. **Primary Routes:** *South*- The south end of the Caribou range is rolling and suitable for ski touring. Steep sections. Allow 5-6 hrs. one way. **Type of Ski Tour Product:** Backcountry ski touring and ski mountaineering. **Comments:** Remote location that can be accessed from McDonnel Lake and Serb Creek. Beautiful views of lakes and mountains. Poor access makes this a backcountry product. **Other winter activities:** Snowmobiling.	H
Sinclair Range	**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine. Small glacier and lakes. Jagged peaks to the west. **Primary Routes:** *South*- The south end of the Caribou range is rolling and suitable for ski touring. Steep sections. Allow 5-6 hrs. one way. **Type of Ski Tour Product:** Backcountry ski touring ing and ski mountaineering. **Comments:** Remote location that can be accessed from Telkwa Pass. Beautiful views of lakes and mountains. Poor access makes this a backcountry product although it is currently being used by snowmobilers. **Other winter activities:** Snowmobiling.	H
Serb Creek	**General Description:** Open marshes and brush. **Primary Routes** Trail that leads to the Caribou Range. **Type of Ski Tour Product:** Backcountry ski touring **Comments:** Open terrain with superb views of surrounding coastal peaks. **Other winter activities:** Snowmobiling.	H

WESTERN UNIT		Suitability
South Telkwa	**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine. Small glacier and lakes. East of range lies Mooseskin Johnny Lakes and South Telkwa. High wildlife values (caribou). **Primary Routes:** *Howson Creek* - Old mining road into Mooseskin Johnny Lake area. **Type of Ski Tour Product:** Back country ski touring, ski mountaineering.. **Comments:** an be linked to the North Telkwa range. Access via the Mooseskin Johnny road. **Other winter activities:** Snowmobiling	**H**
Howsons Range	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with extensive ridges with rolling alpine and sub-alpine, jagged peaks, steep slopes (limited to valleys), glacier. Established trail. **Primary Routes:** Polymer Lake trail **Type of Ski Tour Products:** Ski mountaineering, backcountry skiing. **Comments:** A remote range with extensive glaciers, alpine and subalpine. High quality backcountry ski touring and ski mountaineering. **Other winter activities:** Snowmobiling	**H**

BULKLEY VALLEY AND ADJOINING RANGES UNIT		
Highly diversified unit. Recreation use issues between motorized and non-motorized use need resolution.		
Babine Range	**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine/ alpine. Glacier, lakes and deep valleys. Gravel roads lead to established trails that extend to sub-alpine. **Primary Routes:** *Silver King Basin*: easy ski provides access to a new BC Parks Cabin. *Higgins Creek* - road and trail. 8km. Links to Little Joe trail. BC Parks. *Harvey Mt.*- Views of Silver King and Hudson Bay Mt and the Bulkley Valley. 3 km. *Cronin Pass*- 16.5 km road to alpine. BC Parks. *Ridges above McKendrick Pass* – sometimes has good skiing. *Mt McKendrick* – access from Canyon Creek ski area, used by snowmobilers **Type of Trail Products:** Light ski touring and backcountry ski touring. **Comments:** Provincial Park with established trails. New BC Parks cabin in Silverking Basin. Active snowmobiling in Big Onion. **Other winter activities:** Snowmobiling, snowshoeing.	**H**
Harold Price	**General Description:** Sub-alpine ridges surrounding a forested valley with open meadow. **Primary Routes:** *Harold Price Trail* cross country ski trail leads to a cabin in a valley. **Type of Trail Products:** Light ski touring and cross-country skiing. **Comments:** Close to communities with a diversity of winter opportunities. The area is of interest to both the ski touring and snowmobiling communities. **Other winter activities:** Snowshoeing and snowmobiling.	**H**
Hudson Bay Mt.	**General Description:** Steep slopes, small glaciers, small lakes and rounded subalpine ridges. **Primary Routes:** *Hudson Bay* - Easy ski to Crater Lake. Great views. *Toboggan Creek* - old mining road to alpine and Silvern Lakes. **Type of Ski Tour Products:** Light ski touring, backcountry ski touring and downhill skiing. **Comments:** Close to communities with a diversity of winter opportunities. **Other winter activities:** Snowshoeing	**H**
Microwave	**General Description:** Many small lakes, ponds, creeks, extensive flower meadows on a subalpine plateau **Primary Routes:** Winfield Creek road provides access to the subalpine. **Type of Ski Tour Products:** Backcountry ski touring. **Comments:** Road access to alpine and subalpine meadows. Currently high use and very popular with local residents. Potential conflicting of use with snowmobilers. **Other winter activities:** Snowmobiling.	**H**
North Telkwa	**General Description**: Rounded ridges with rolling sub-alpine /alpine. Small glacier and lakes. Logging roads lead to open terrain and skiing opportunities. High wildlife values (caribou). **Primary Routes:** *Hunter Basin*- Old mining road to alpine. Possibility of circle route linking the Mooseskin Johnny and Hunter Basin roads. **Type of Ski Tour Products:** Backcountry ski touring. **Comments:** Extensive evidence of historical mining activity, great views of the Bulkley Valley from Houston to Moricetown. Sensitive to the requirements of the mountain caribou. **Other winter activities:** Snowmobiling	**H**

BULKLEY VALLEY AND ADJOINING RANGES UNIT		
Highly diversified unit. Recreation use issues between motorized and non-motorized use need resolution.		
Seaton Blunt	**General Description**: Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine also many rugged cirque talus basins, sharp ridges and gendarmes. **Primary Routes:** *Seaton Ridge*- Steep difficult trail through timber to alpine. *Seaton Basin*- Old mining trail access into Seaton Basin. Moderate to difficult. **Type of Ski Tour Products:** Light Ski Touring and backcountry ski touring. **Comments:** Open rolling terrain enhance the ski touring product. **Other winter activities:** Snowmobiling.	**H**
Rocher Deboule Range	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, small glacier, many cirque basins. **Primary Routes:** *Boulder Creek road* provides access to the alpine. **Type of Ski Tour Products:** Back country ski touring. **Comments:** Steep difficult terrain limits opportunities in the Bulkley side of the range. **Other winter activities:** Snowmobiling (limited)	**L**
Sandstone / Louise and McDonnel Lake	**General Description:** McDonnel Lake is the trailhead to the Sandstone Louise Lakes area. **Primary Routes:** *McDonnel Lake*- Moderate hike of 5 km to alpine and the Sandstone / Louis Lake group. Trails around Sandstone Louise. **Type of Ski Tour Products:** Light Ski Touring. **Comments:** Sandstone Louise offers reasonable ski touring in a forested lakeside setting. **Other winter activities:** Snowmobiling (limited), snowshoeing, dogsledding.	**M**

NORTHEAST UNIT		
Remote ranges are difficult to access. In general the opportunities are limited to the Thoen French. The Sicintine is overshadowed by the more significant opportunities of the Atna Range in the Kispiox FD.		
Thoen-French	**General Description:** This section has extensive rounded ridges with rolling sub-alpine /alpine. **Primary Routes:** *French Peak trail* - a 2 km moderate hike from the end of mining road. *Suskwa Pass Trail* - tour of historic wagon supply trail from Hazelton to Fort Babine. Difficult 20 km. Trail overgrown, not maintained. **Type of Ski Tour Products:** Backcountry Ski Touring. **Comments:** High and dry snowfall enhance the skiing opportunities. The distance from road accessible communities makes this a backcountry product. **Other winter activities:** Snowmobiling (limited), Heli-skiing, Cat skiing.	**H**
Netazul	**General Description:** Short range with glacier. Sharp ridges with some rolling alpine. Wide expanses of alpine meadow/subalpine forest on either side of ridge, extensive wetlands east of the ridge. High mountain goat population. **Primary Routes:** *French Peak trail* - a 2 km moderate hike from the end of mining road. *Suskwa Pass Trail* - tour of historic wagon supply trail from Hazelton to Fort Babine. Difficult 20 km. Trail overgrown, not maintained. **Type of Ski Tour Products:** Backcountry Ski Touring. Ski mountaineering. **Comments:** Steep rugged terrain and the distance from road accessibility limit opportunities. Wildlife constraints. **Other winter activities:** Nil.	**L**
Sicintine	**General Description:** Remote dramatic landscape with extensive ridges with rolling alpine / sub-alpine, jagged peaks, small lakes & wetlands, steep slopes (valleys), glaciers, Shelagyote Peak and glacial features including morraines, outwash plains and braided streams. **Primary Routes:** nil **Type of Ski Tour Products:** Backcountry Ski Touring. Ski mountaineering. **Comments:** Remote, difficult to access, primitive area with extensive glaciers. Avalanche considerations in the valleys. Suitable for ski mountaineering and potential for heli-sking on the east side. Easy to get around. **Other winter activities:** Nil.	**H**

Downhill skiing – the snow conditions, the existing facility at Hudson Bay Mountain with 34 runs and a vertical of 1750 feet provide high opportunities.

Heliskiing and snowcat skiing require areas with higher snowfall far from any road access. The skiable vertical relief in the area is not as great or numerous as in established operations in other parts of BC. The helicopter opportunities may compliment ski touring in a number of the more remote ranges or on slopes close to Smithers. One such slope is the King Louis run down the front of Hudson Bay Mountain in the Bulkley Valley, a 1800 vertical meters at a constant 34 degrees, from peak to Glacier Gulch.

Potential opportunities

Opportunities for all the skiing sub-products can be enhanced through:

- The use of helicopters for transport.
- Further diversification of the snow products through the expansion into other winter activities such as dog sledding and snowshoeing.
- The development of a linear, circuit or single hut system.

7.7.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.7.4.1 MARKETS

In Canada, skiing is more likely to be undertaken by women (54%) than men. The fact that 38% of skiers are travelling in a family group also distinguishes it from other activities. The vast majority of participants in BC are residents. Statistics from the US indicate that: 52% of skiers are women, 45% of skiers are age 35-54, 41% of skiers are college educated, and 49% of skiers have household incomes in excess of $50,000(USD). Participation has been increasing amongst senior citizens as the activity has been promoted as an excellent way to enjoy the outdoors and maintain a good level of fitness.

The most popular reasons given for why people ski include: 1) the whole family can participate together, 2) practical fun way to enjoy the outdoors during the winter, 3) social contact with other skiers on the trail and at ski area lodges, 4) ideal cross training sport for running and biking, and 5) weight loss - burns more calories per hour than any other sport.

The market for cross-country skiing is small but growing strongly. It has one of the lowest participation rates among North Americans of all products studied in this report, but future projections for participation are encouraging. John Hof's extensive research on future American participation indicates that snow and ice activities will grow proportionately faster than land-based activities. Of the 19 activities studied in his most recent analysis, cross-country skiing was projected to have the third highest growth rate in participation, following only sailing and downhill skiing.[77] As skiing technology improves (e.g. touring skis are now more shapely, giving beginners increased performance with less effort for activities like telemarking) and as lift-service options expand, ski touring will become even more accessible to a broader market.

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[77] Outdoor Recreation in America, p 184, Clayne R. Jensen, 1995.

The number of Europeans and other overseas visitors who participate in this sport in Canada is negligible. The majority of cross-country skiers also participate in other outdoor sports such as hiking, camping and fishing; 25 percent are also alpine skiers.[78] This would suggest some family-oriented opportunities among visitors to Hudson's Bay Mountain.

There are several areas in BC and Alberta with quality ski terrain, whether for touring or conventional cross-country. In neighbouring regions such as Alberta, there are dozens of huts within a day's ski from main highways that are popular as multi-day and weekend destinations. The quality of ski touring in the Canadian Rockies is recognized worldwide and this has prompted the national parks to actively promote the activity. For commercial operators, the main challenge is in attracting clientele. The chances of converting self-guided ski tourers to purchasers of services will be very challenging. In addition to the park system, local alpine clubs and societies provide access to over 40 public backcountry huts to ski tourers at little or no cost. Anecdotal evidence suggests capacity is rarely exceeded at these cabins.

7.7.4.2 IMPACTS/CONFLICTS

On Crown land, good terrain is likely to be valued by snowmobilers but the presence of mechanized transportation of any form (helicopters, snow-cats, snowmobiles) will be problematic for ski touring development. Still, the actual area needed for ski touring is not that large (e.g. 20 square kilometres) compared to other backcountry users like heli-skiing and snowmobiling. Although pristine environments are preferred by ski tourers they may be able to co-exist within heli-skiing areas if operators are willing to cooperate. It is also generally recognized that the presence of ski tourers does not significantly affect heli-skiing and cat-skiing operations. On the other hand, snowmobiles and backcountry skiers do not mix well and the existence of other winter commercial tenures can have a negative impact on the amount of terrain available to initiate a ski touring business.

Forest tenures are also problematic for ski touring as the activity relies heavily on unmodified landscapes as a principal attractant. Although most ski touring activity takes place in the alpine and subalpine zones where forestry values are minimal, visually altered landscapes are visible for miles and negatively affect the experience. Privately owned land is not a major issue in the district.

7.7.4.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Infrastructure requirements for ski touring are minimal as the lack of development and access to wilderness is what attracts users in the first place. However, convenience of access and more backcountry accommodation will attract more users. Road access, or in some cases other forms of motorized transportation, to within a reasonable distance of the activity is a critical factor in the success of a ski touring business. Secure vehicle parking at trail heads, access to daily avalanche forecasts, and the availability of backcountry huts and cabins are advantageous for ski tourers who are out for a number of days.

Smithers has some cross-country skiing infrastructure at the Smithers Community Forest and Howson Lake. Further improvements in access, parking, signage, rentals, hospitality services, hut and fee collection, ski patrol, grooming and off-season trail maintenance would attract more visitors.

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[78] SnowSports Industries America, 1999

Some cross-country ski areas have transformed themselves into multi-use, winter playgrounds or resort areas.[79] This is to have a broader market appeal including couples and families. Resorts such as Whistler have seen cross-country ski visitation grow at a faster rate than downhill visits through investments in facilities and services.

Any development of a nordic centre would require access to Crown tenure to justify the economic costs of development. This way, non-compatible activities can be controlled and restricted. Given that a nordic centre should be located within a reasonable distance of its market (in this case near Smithers or Telkwa) the cost and availability of land may be a major issue (e.g. if private lands need to be purchased). Given adequate financial resources, the landscape can be modified as necessary to accommodate the required terrain characteristics for a quality facility.

7.7.4.4 OVERALL POTENTIAL

There is potential for some immediate modest growth in the local, regional and international adventure recreation markets, principally among winter backcountry users. Focused promotional efforts will be required to increase exposure, and in this sense, not having any national parks in the region is a disadvantage. In the Canadian Rockies, Parks Canada is actively trying to convert more international visitors from touring travellers to ecotourists (and thereby consumers of ski touring products). Again, this may be best achieved by associating the activity with hut or lodge-based operations.

In spite of the favourable market trends, the ski touring product will be difficult to expand in the study area. The main area of competition is the southern Canadian Rockies (Jasper, Canmore, Banff, Golden, Revelstoke) where the product quality is recognized worldwide and heavily promoted by both the national and provincial park systems. Even commercial operators there have difficulty attracting clientele because between the park system and local alpine clubs and societies, there is relatively inexpensive access to over 40 public backcountry huts. The best commercial potential will be for ski touring packaged around lodge and resort development. In addition, the close proximity of several outdoor winter activities to Smithers/Telkwa may hold out some opportunity for multi-activity packages involving activities such as downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, ice climbing and ski touring.

The potential for cross-country skiing is also favourable. By taking advantage of existing groomed trails and infrastructures, for example at Smithers Community Forest and Howson Lake, development can be facilitated. While natural features such as varied terrain are important, the built environment is critical – that means things like night lighting, parking, clear signage, high-quality and well-maintained equipment, transportation services and the availability of multi-activity packages can really broader the appeal. There are already facilities in the communities which could be expanded and enhanced. Smithers there is very good potential to market nordic skiing to downhill skiers travelling to Hudson's Bay Mountain. Visitation statistics from Whistler indicate that participation in cross-country skiing is growing at rates comparable to downhill skiing. It is believed that many downhill skiers are responsible for this expansion.

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[79] SkiTrax, p.29, December/Holiday 1999

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA				
UNITS:		**Bulkley**	**Western**	**Northeast**
Markets	Demand	**Low**: low participation rates, niche-oriented. X-country demand is regional, touring demand is more diverse		
	Competition	**Medium**: many areas are better-known as touring destinations (e.g. National Parks) and X-country ski centres		
	Overall potential	**Medium**: good resources, but distance from markets a barrier, and conflicts with snowmobiling problematic		**Low**: lack of infrastructure
Impact/ Conflict	Use	**Medium**: relatively low impacts in confined areas for both X-country and touring. Major conflicts with snowmobilers in Harold Price/Blunt Mountain areas		
	Community/Social	**Low**: X-country development would enhance resident recreational opportunities		
Business Development Needs	Crown tenure	**Low-Medium**: X-country could be done near settlement areas, wilderness attributes key for touring (park use permits often preferred by operators)		
	Infrastructure	**Medium-**: hospitality, trail, hut infrastructure all required		**High**: investments in public and private infrastructure
	Capital	**Low-High**: low basic capital requirements for guides, higher if huts developed, medium to high for communities or operators wanting to develop full-service nordic facilities		
Level of community support		**Low**: conforms to economic development goals, but conflicts with resident desire for maximum snowmobile access		**Low**: low priority
Employment opportunities		**Medium**: a nordic centre would create a number of service positions, increased volumes of visiting skiers would probably be absorbed by existing operators		
Opportunities		▸ Linkages to hut and lodges ▸ Possible ski tour access by snowmobile ▸ Development of a nordic centre (Canyon Creek) ▸ Multi-day, multi-experience tours (Ski touring, snowmobiling, ski-mountaineering, snowshoeing, XC skiing) ▸ Cross marketing to Hudson's Bay visitors.		▸ Nordic skiing ▸ Multi-activity packages linked to dog sledding and snow shoeing

7.7.5 High Opportunity Areas

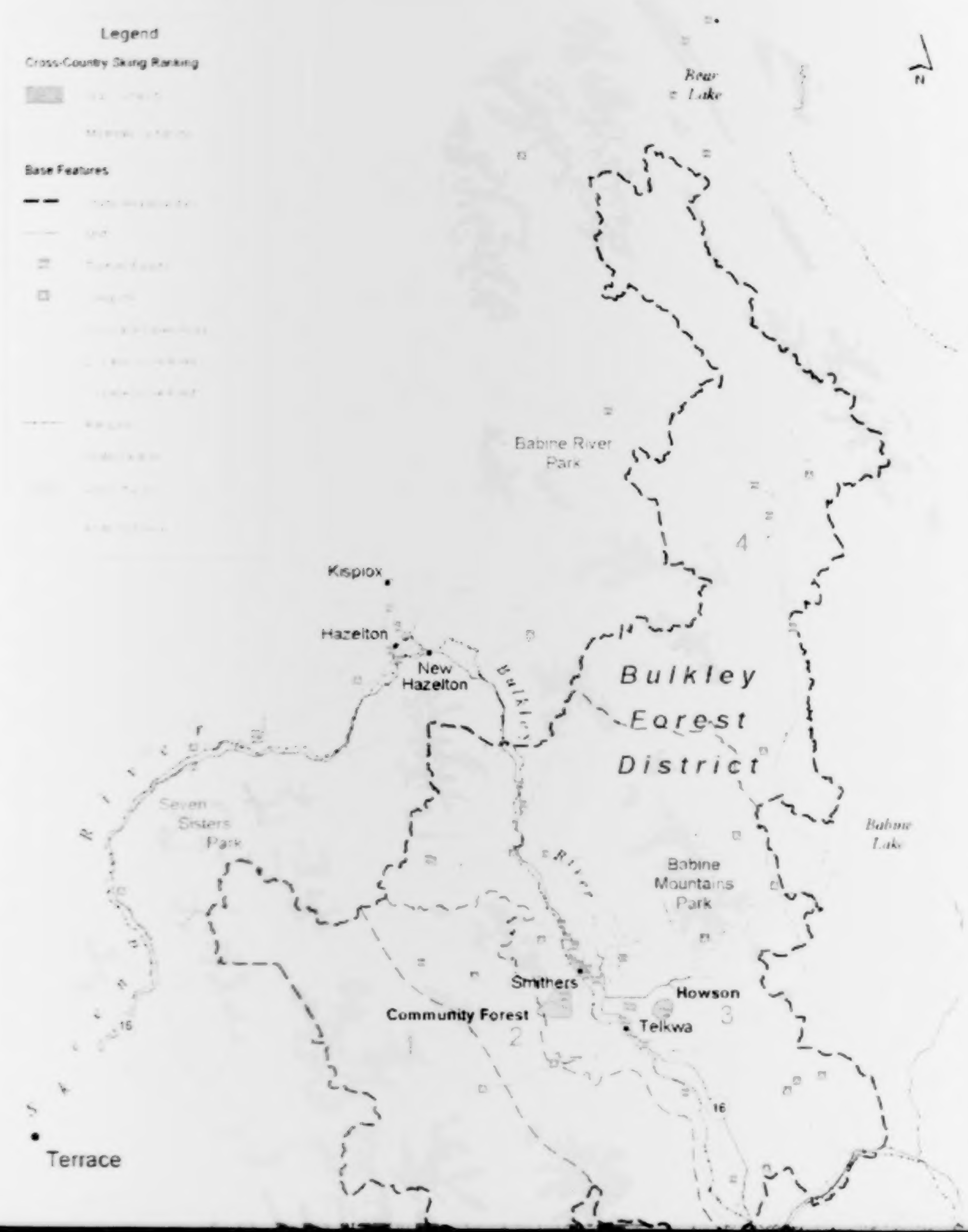
Polygon Names
South Telkwa
North Telkwa
Caribou
Sinclair
Mulwain /Red
Ashman
Serb Creek
Hudson Bay
Babine (outside snowmobile area)
Harold Price
Seaton Blunt
Thoen French

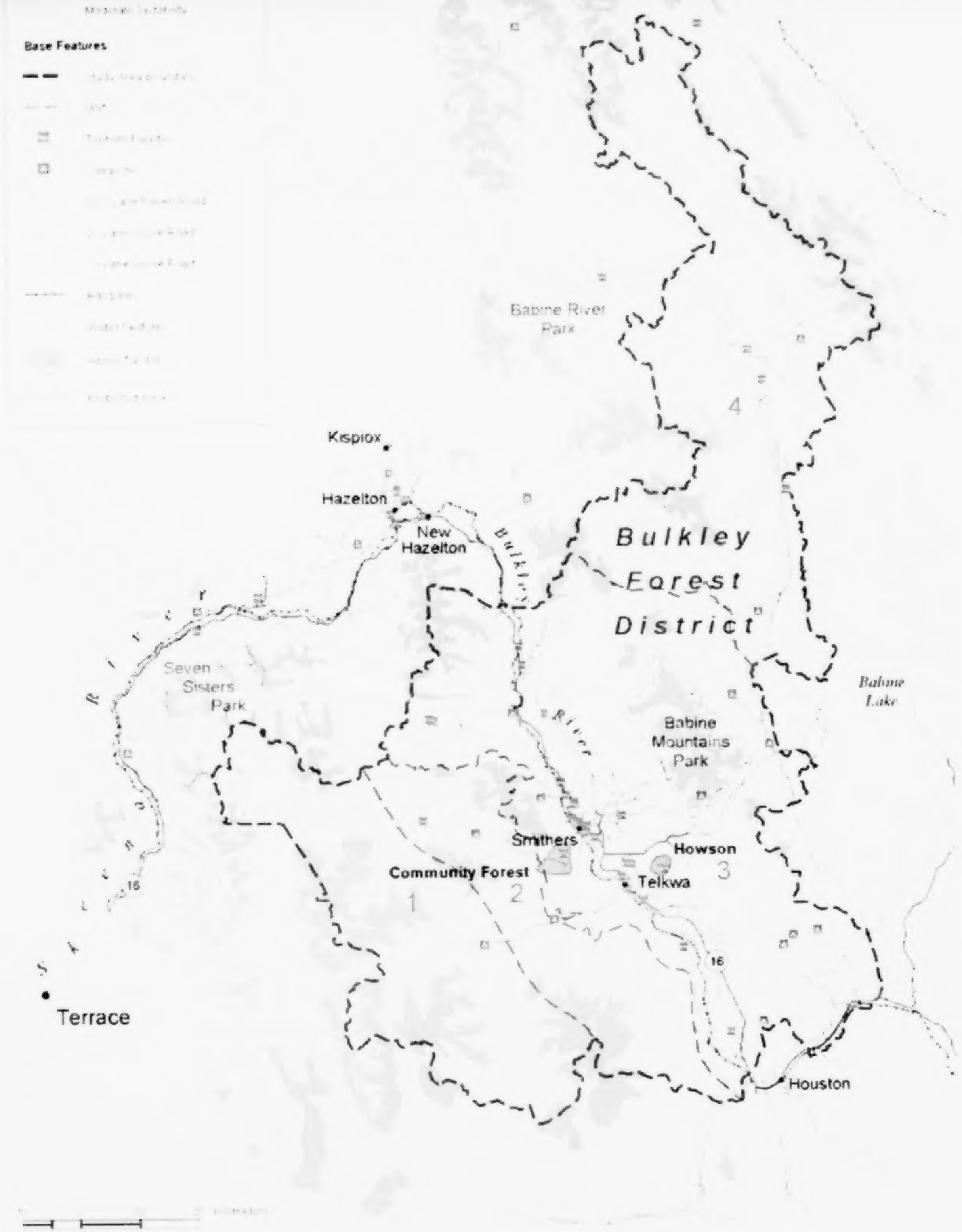
7.7.6 Nordic Skiing/Ski Touring – Suitability Map

On the following pages are the tourism suitability maps for the Cross-Country (Exhibit 32) and Ski Touring products (Exhibit 33).

Bulkley Tourism Opportunity Study

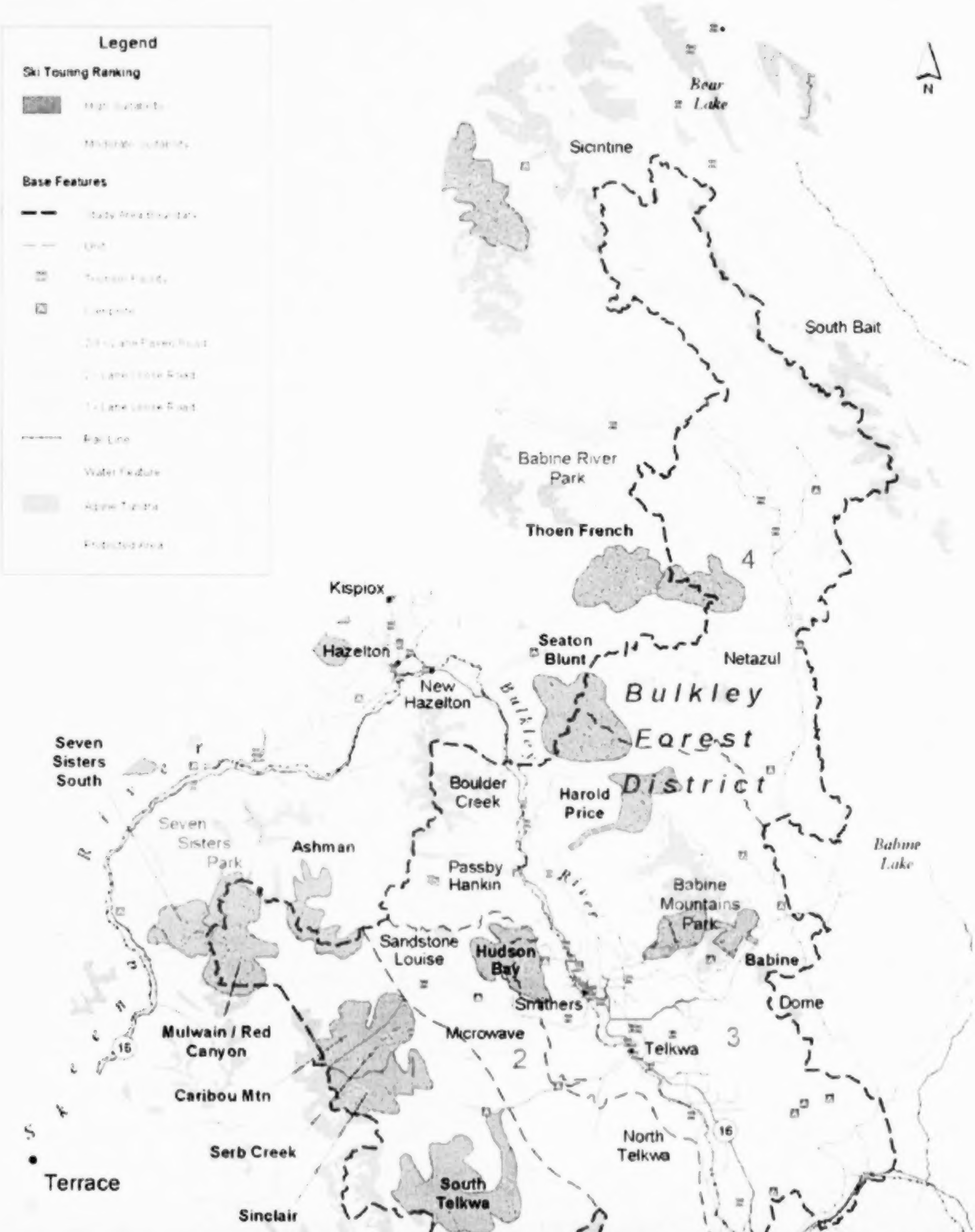
Cross-Country Skiing Suitability

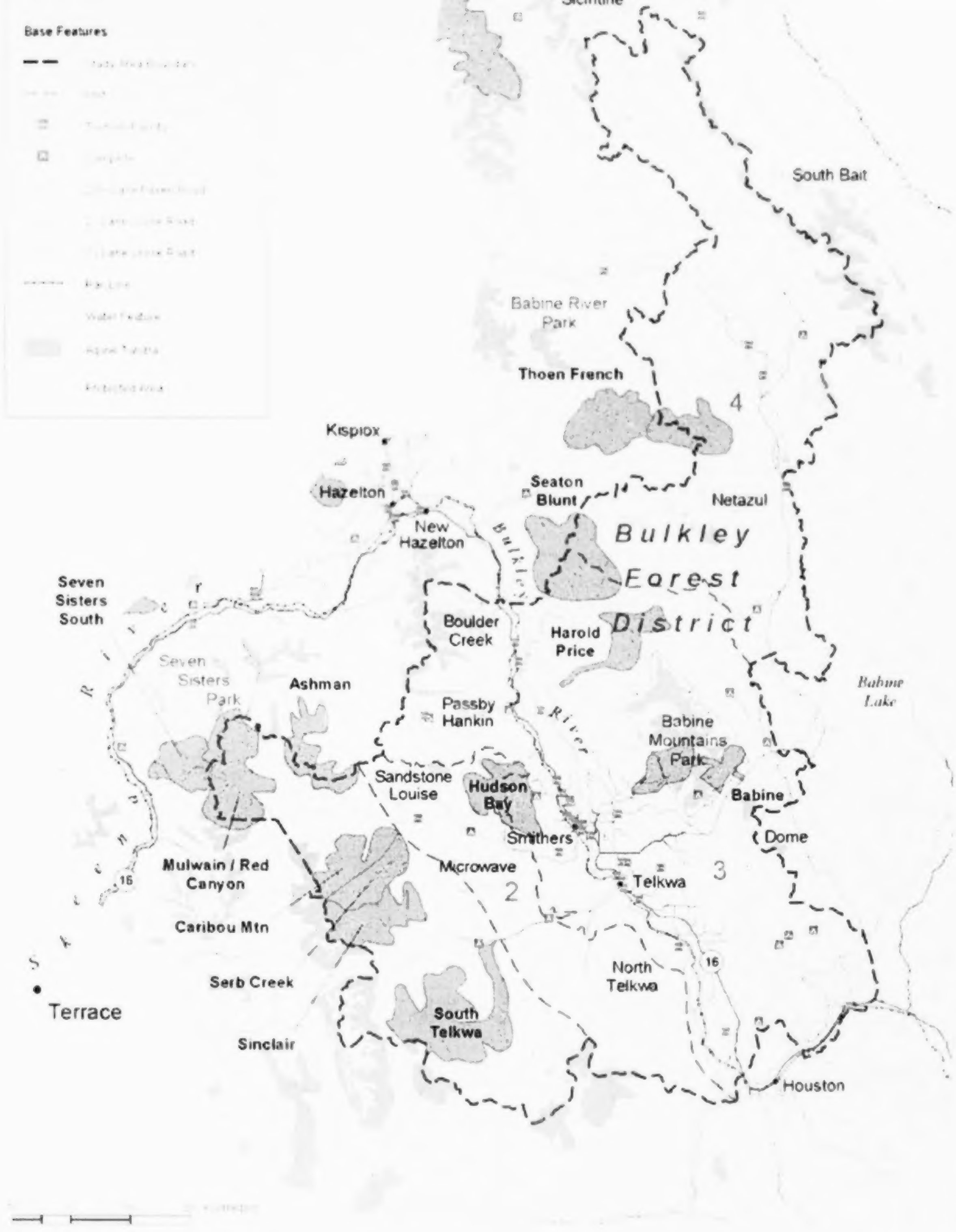

Legend
Cross-Country Skiing Ranking
Base Features
N
Bear Lake
Babine River Park
4
Kispiox
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Bulkley Forest District
Seven Sisters Park
River
Babine Lake
Babine Mountains Park
Smithers
Howson
Community Forest
Telkwa
1
2
3
16
16
Terrace


Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Study Area Boundary
Unit
Tourism Facility
Campsite
Rail Line
Water Feature
Babine River Park
4
Kispiox
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Bulkley Forest District
Skeena River
Seven Sisters Park
Babine Lake
River
Babine Mountains Park
Smithers
Howson
3
Community Forest
1
2
Telkwa
16
Houston
Terrace

Bulkley Tourism Opportunity Study

Ski Touring Suitability


Legend
Ski Touring Ranking
High Suitability
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Study Area Boundary
Unit
Tourism Facility
Campsite
2+ Lane Paved Road
2+ Lane Loose Road
1 Lane Loose Road
Rail Line
Water Feature
Alpine Tundra
Protected Area
N
Bear Lake
Sicintine
South Bait
Babine River Park
Thoen French
4
Kispiox
Hazelton
Seaton Blunt
Netazul
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Bulkley Forest District
Seven Sisters South
Boulder Creek
Harold Price
Seven Sisters Park
Ashman
Passby Hankin
Babine Lake
Babine Mountains Park
Sandstone Louise
Hudson Bay
Babine
River
Smithers
Dome
Mulwain / Red Canyon
Microwave
Telkwa
3
2
16
Caribou Mtn
North Telkwa
Serb Creek
Terrace
South Telkwa
Sinclair
Skeena River


Base Features
Study Area Boundary
Road
Campsite
Park Line
Water Feature
Alpine Tundra
Protected Area
South Bait
Babine River Park
Thoen French
4
Kispiox
Hazelton
Seaton Blunt
Netazul
New Hazelton
Bulkley Forest District
Bulkley
Seven Sisters South
Boulder Creek
Harold Price
Seven Sisters Park
Ashman
Passby Hankin
River
Babine Lake
Babine Mountains Park
Skeena River
Sandstone Louise
Hudson Bay
Babine
Smithers
Dome
Mulwain / Red Canyon
Microwave
2
Telkwa
3
16
Caribou Mtn
North Telkwa
16
Serb Creek
Terrace
South Telkwa
Sinclair
Houston

7.8 Summer Trail Products

7.8.1 Description

Trail products include hiking (generally frontcountry, mid-country or from a lodge), backpacking (midcountry/backcountry), animal assisted, such as llama or horse packing (primarily backcountry) or horseback riding (front country to backcountry). The activities take place on trails or off trail, terrain permitting.

Frontcountry and midcountry *hikes* are primarily single day. Backcountry trips are primarily multi-day. Midcountry trips can be either single or multi-day. Day use is usually based from a lodge, resort or guest ranch, ideally in an attractive natural setting where the operation of a ranch is feasible, and where there is easy accessibility to a network of trails. Multi-day trips or *backpacking*, set in the midcountry or backcountry, usually requiring wilderness or near wilderness settings, and cabins or camps to accommodate recreationists. Accessibility to trails is required and alpine or sub-alpine zones are a preferred destination if possible. However, steep, rocky or boggy areas are considered as undesirable for commercial ventures because they are dangerous and can create too much liability for operators.

The *llama packing* product is essentially a hiking product, wherein llamas are used to pack the gear with participants walking or hiking alongside. Horse packing is generally associated with the guest riding alongside on another horse. Llamas are very sure-footed, and can access most areas that a hiker is willing to go. There is also some novelty associated with the animals and this can be an attractant in itself, although the prime motivation for participants is a wilderness experience in scenic remote terrain.

Trails are the key ingredient for the viability of any *horse-packing* operation, and therefore trails (and roads) are the primary screen. Good trails or narrow gravel roads are preferred, as these provide ideal footing for the horses, yet provide the rider with a sense of being part of the surroundings. Wider roads serve mainly as access to narrower ones or trails. Slopes are the next major consideration, as steeper slopes quickly become awkward for horse and rider, and introduce the undesirable possibility of accidents and associated liability. Environmentally sensitive features such as the alpine/subalpine and boggy areas are a major consideration with regards to the degradation of the trails and surrounding terrain. Features such as attractive scenery, cabins, waterfalls, lakes etc. can enhance the experience. Alpine areas, if accessible, are a considerable attractant.

Generally, hiking and backpacking are self-guided. Horseback riding is generally associated with a guide. Llama or horse packing typically involve a guide/outfitter who offers overnight (or longer) pack trips into wilderness areas and which naturally include camping, cooking and other guide services. Operators offer both moving trips (move each day) or day trips from a base camp.

Established trails require maintenance to assure their viability and safety. A commitment to undertake this responsibility lies with either provincial government (with a focus on Parks, Forest Service Recreation trails, community forests), local governments (regional parks), non-profit organizations (often times for activity specific use, such as crosscountry skiing or snowmobiling) or private landowners (often associated with horseback riding).

7.8.2 Regional Overview

Strengths	Variable scenery and natural features. Established trails. Maze of logging roads. Most significant access to alpine areas by trails in Northern BC, many trails near local communities
Weaknesses	No commitment for long term maintenance of trails by various agencies.
Concerns	Conflicting uses. Potential for impact by industrial logging/mining activities

7.8.3 Resource Assessment

Bulkley Plan Area has numerous "trails" that were developed by trappers, miners, First Nations and recreation users as well as forestry roads. The trail inventory database may not identify many possible routes generally known by guide outfitters. The following table will list the most popular established trails suitable for the trail based product.

Hiking (frontcountry and midcountry) and Backpacking (midcountry and backcountry) opportunities can take place in the many trails and roads in the Bulkley region. There is a wide range of difficulties, enhancing the opportunities. The most popular established trails acceptable to hiking include:

NAME	Frontcountry Midcounty Backcountry	GENERAL DESCRIPTION	
WESTERN			**Suitability**
South Telkwa/ Mooseskin Johnny		**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine. Small glacier and lakes. East of range lies Mooseskin Johnny Lakes and South Telkwa. High wildlife values (caribou). **Primary Trails:** *Howson Creek* - Old mining road into Mooseskin Johnny Lake area. Very rough in places. **Type of Trail Products:** Multi-day hiking, horse riding, animal assisted. **Comments:** Remote location that can be closely associated with Mooseskin Johnny. **Other summer activities:** Mountaineering, camping and ATV.	H
Caribou		**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine. Small glacier and lakes. Jagged peaks to the west. **Primary Trails:** *South-* Difficult hike. Allow 5-6 hrs. one way. Beautiful views of lakes and mountains. *North-* Old mining trail, somewhat overgrown, Allow 3 hrs. one way. **Type of Trail Products:** Multi-day hiking, horse riding, animal assisted. **Comments:** Remote location that can be accessed from the Telkwa Pass. **Other summer activities:** Mountaineering, mountain biking, camping and ATV.	M
Telkwa Pass		**General Description:** Road that leads towards Terrace. **Primary Trails:** Telkwa Pass **Type of Trail Products:** Hiking, horse riding, animal assisted. **Comments:** A popular route that links Telkwa and Terrace. An excellent overnight trip that is usually biked rather than hiked. **Other summer activities:** ATV, camping and mountain biking.	M

BULKLEY VALLEY AND ADJOINING RANGES		
Babine Range	**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine/ alpine. Glacier, lakes and deep valleys. Gravel roads lead to established trails that extend to sub-alpine. **Primary Trails:** *McCabe trail* - Great novice and family hike. 8 km.; 3-4 hrs. one way. BC Parks. *Silver King Basin* Road and trail provides access into the alpine. BC Parks. *Little Joe Creek* - Alpine lakes and views. 9 km. 3-4 hrs. one way. BC Parks. *Hyland Pass*- Trail links the Cronin Pass and Silver King Basin trails 15 km. BC Parks. *Higgins Creek* - road and trail. 8km. 3-4 hrs. one way. Links to Little Joe trail. BC Parks. *Lyon Creek*- Moderate hike into the Babine Mt. 10 km. Allow 4-5 hrs one way. *Reisetter Ridge* - rolling alpine trail with a Parks use permit for horse riding. *Harvey Mt.*- Views of Silver King and Hudson Bay Mt and the Bulkley Valley. 3 km. *Onion Mt.*- Road access to meadows of Ganokwa Basin. 6 km, 2 hrs. one way. BC Parks. *Cronin Pass*-Vehicles can be driven to trail head for an easy hike into alpine. Horse riding. *Moricetown/Cronin trail*- A horse riding, hiking and cross-country ski trail leads to a cabin. **Type of Trail Products:** Hiking, Backpacking (multi-day), horse riding, animal assisted. **Comments:** Provincial Park with established trails. Babine Range to the Astlais Mountain. Reiseter extension has a commercial horse use. All trails are used by hikers. Historical mining activity evident. New BC Parks cabin in Silverking Basin. **Other summer activities:** Mountain biking, camping.	**H**
Frontcountry Trails (Bulkley Valley)	**General Description:** Trails close to communities and road access. **Primary Trails:** *Malkow Lookout* - moderate hike that provides views of the Bulkley Valley. *Smithers Perimeter*- Trail is easy family oriented, which circumnavigates the town. *Telkwa Community* – Variety of family oriented, river side trails to Tyhee Park, historic Aldermere. *Toboggan Creek Fish Hatchery* – view salmon run in the fall *Call Lake Provincial Park* – biking and hiking near Smithers *Smithers Community Forest* - Interpretive Nature Trail 3.5 km long. Harvesting Demonstration trail 2.2 km long. *Twin Falls* - Short hiking trail to a viewing platform and base of main falls **Type of Trail Products:** Hiking, Backpacking (multi-day), horse riding, animal assisted. **Comments:** These trails are predominantly for local use but can provide for a diversity of opportunities in the valley. **Other summer activities:** ATV, mountain biking, picnicking,	**H**
Hudson Bay Range	**General Description:** Steep slopes, small glaciers, small lakes and rounded subalpine ridges. Ski mountain. **Primary Trails:** *Silvern Creek* - Trail through timber to alpine. Scenic views of Silvern lakes. *Hudson Bay* - Easy hike to Crater Lake. Great views, marmots, ptarmigan. 2 hrs. one way. A well marked route continues to the peak *Glacier Gulch* - Moderate to difficult hike to the base of Hudson Bay Glacier. 2 hrs. one way. *Toboggan Creek* - very rough old mining road to alpine and Silvern Lakes. 3-4 hrs. one way *Simpson Creek* - old mining road with impressive views. Allow 3-4 hr. one way. **Type of Trail Products:** Hiking, Backpacking (multi-day), horse riding, animal assisted. **Comments:** Close to communities. These trails are predominantly for local use but can provide for a diversity of opportunities in the valley. **Other summer activities:** ATV, camping, mountain biking.	**H**
Microwave	**General Description:** Many small lakes, ponds, creeks, extensive flower meadows on a subalpine plateau **Primary Trails:** Winfield Creek road provides access to the subalpine. **Type of Trail Products:** Hiking. **Comments:** Road access to alpine and subalpine meadows. Extensive trail network in the alpine. Many old mining roads for exploration, ponds, streams & flower meadows. Currently high use and very popular with local residents. **Other summer activities:** ATV, mountain biking	**H**
Ashman Ridge	**General Description:** Extensive snow with a variety of terrain from rolling ridges to jagged peaks and steep slopes. **Primary Trails:** Access from Kispiox. **Type of Trail Products:** Hiking, Backpacking (multi-day), horse riding, animal assisted. **Comments:** Relatively short access to alpine, early spring access because south facing. **Other summer activities:** Mountaineering.	**H**

BULKLEY VALLEY AND ADJOINING RANGES		
North Telkwa	**General Description**: Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine. Small glacier and lakes. Logging roads lead to trails and hiking opportunities. West of range lies the Mooseskin Johnny Lakes. High wildlife values (caribou). **Primary Trails:** *Hunter Basin-* Old mining road to alpine. Rough overgrown in places. 2-3 hrs to timberline *Webster Lake-* Moderate to difficult hiking. 6.3 km to timberline. 3 hrs. one way. *Hankin Plateau-* Originally a mining pack trail built in the early 1900's. Moderate to difficult. 2-3 hrs. to alpine. **Type of Trail Products:** Hiking, Backpacking (multi-day), animal assisted (wildlife constraints). **Comments:** Extensive evidence of historical mining activity, great views of the Bulkley Valley from Houston to Moricetown. Sensitive to the requirements of the mountain caribou. **Other summer activities:** Mountain biking. Mountaineering.	**H**
Rocher Deboule	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, small glacier, many cirque basins. **Primary Trails:** *Boulder Creek-* Old mining road. Impressive views. Allow 3-4 hrs. one way **Type of Trail Products:** Hiking, Backpacking (multi-day), animal assisted (wildlife constraints). **Comments:** Steep terrain with limited opportunities for subalpine off road travel. **Other summer activities:** Mountain biking. Mountaineering (rockclimbing)	**M**
Seaton Blunt	**General Description**: Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine also many rugged cirque talus basins, sharp ridges and gendarmes. **Primary Trails:** *Seaton Ridge-* Steep difficult trail through timber to alpine. 2-3 hrs one way. *Seaton Basin-* Old mining trail access into Seaton Basin. Moderate to difficult. Wet in the summer. **Type of Trail Products:** Hiking, Backpacking (multi-day), animal assisted. **Comments:** Mount Seaton and Blunt Mountain are the scenic features. Rock. Wet alpine and subalpine hampers summer opportunities. **Other summer activities:** Mountain biking and mountaineering.	**M**
Dome Mountain	**General Description:** Small subalpine ridge in the Morice Forest District. **Primary Trails:** *Dome Mountain* **Type of Trail Products:** Hiking, horse riding. **Comments:** An old mining road provides a moderate ride to a snowmobile cabin. **Other summer activities:** ATV.	**M**
Sandstone / Louise and McDonnel Lake	**General Description:** McDonnel Lake is the trailhead to alpine and the Sandstone Louise Lakes area. **Primary Trails:** *McDonnel Lake-* Moderate hike of 5 km to alpine. Allow 3 hrs. one way. **Type of Trail Products:** Hiking, horse riding. **Comments:** The Sandstone Louise Lake can be wet during the summer and therefore unsuitable for summer hiking activities. **Other summer activities:** ATV.	**L**

NORTHEAST		
Thoen-French	**General Description:** This section has extensive rounded ridges with rolling sub-alpine and alpine. **Primary Trails:** *French Peak trail* - a 2 km moderate hike frm end of rough mining road. Views. *Suskwa Pass Trail* - tour of historic wagon supply trail from Hazelton to Fort Babine. Difficult 20 km. Trail overgrown, not maintained. **Type of Trail Products:** Hiking, horse riding. **Comments:** Location of the historic Suskwa Pass trail. **Other summer activities:** ATV.	**H**

Llama packing can take place in the more remote backcountry areas. There is a concern that the llamas may carry infectious diseases to indigenous mammals such as the Mountain Caribou, whose numbers are already in decline.

Horse packing and riding along the Reiseter Ridge, the Harvey Mountain Trail, Silver King Basin, Higgins Creek Road and trail, the Moricetown / Cronin Trail, the Mooseskin Johnny Trail and the Passby Trail in the Kitseguecla valley.

Opportunities for all the summer trail sub-products can be enhanced through:

- proper trail development and maintenance
- identification of trails in areas with the highest potential with consideration for:
- recreation feature groupings,
- circle routes,
- suitable terrain,
- access to staging areas,
- environmental constraints, and
- associated products including air access and hut system or destination lodge.

Potential opportunities can be enhanced through the development of a:

- Heli-hiking opportunities within the Hudson Bay Range and the Rocher Deboule.
- Utilizing a hut system focus for a multi-day backcountry extension into the South Telkwa from Mooseskin Johnny and from Goat Mountain to the Babine Range.
- Backcountry linkages to the Wetsuwetun heritage trails.

7.8.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.8.4.1 MARKETS

The trail product is actually a composite of several different activities, the two primary ones being trail riding and hiking.

In Canada, **trail riding** adventurers tend to be fairly evenly distributed across all age groups, with a higher participation rate from females (53.3%) than males. They tend to travel with friends (27.0%) or in couples (26.7%). Two-thirds are from Canada, although a significant portion come from other countries (19.4%).[80] Countries with a high level of interest in trail riding include Germany. Competition is relatively low for this product as there are very few operators regionally, but short-haul markets that pass through the region have a wide selection of trail riding opportunities in neighbouring regions, include the Cariboo-Chilcotin, Prince George and the Alberta Rockies. Important secondary activities include river activities, hiking and nature observation.

The **hiking** market in Canada has a very broad based demographic profile with an even distribution across age groups and by gender. BC and Canadian residents make up three quarters of the market, while equal shares of the remaining quarter are accounted for by US and overseas visitors. Hiking is a primary trip activity for Canadian travellers, with 32 percent, or 5.2 million, participating in hiking or walking on their last long overnight pleasure trip. Of all outdoor recreation activities, hiking has been one of the highest growing in terms of participation in the US. The US market grew by 93 percent from 24.7 million participants in 1982-1983 to 47.7 million participants in 1994-1995.[81] Hiking has a very good participation rate, and therefore high demand, among Europeans, especially Germans. Like trail riding, hiking is often combined with other activities such as wildlife viewing; camping and backpacking, all of which are experiencing increased participation levels. Many surveys combine hiking with backpacking for their statistics. As well, many operators include backpacking and extended trekking under the category of guided hikes.

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[80] Adventure Travel and Ecotourism in

Canada: Strategic Framework for Development, p.3-32, 1997.

There is extensive competition regionally, nationally and internationally for travellers interested in pursuing hiking. For the hiking enthusiast in pursuit of a challenging, wilderness trek products like the West Coast Trail, the Nootka Island Trail and Berg Lake Trail have well-earned reputations and regularly attract capacity visitation. The national and provincial park systems cater extensively to this market. Similarly, many communities and all parks have developed trail inventories and related services that create a safe and interesting product for the soft adventurer/participant.

7.8.4.2 IMPACTS/CONFLICTS

Trail riding and packing generally requires access to large tracts of Crown land where some trail development has taken place. Contact with other users, especially those using mechanized transportation, is seen as undesirable. Unaltered landscapes are preferred. Day use trail riding is more compatible with multi-use trails, as this product is not so highly associated with wilderness. However, the use of trails for multi-day wilderness trips needs to be planned relative to other uses, e.g. horse or llama packing and ATV tours are likely not compatible. Forest tenures can have a major impact on areas where trails have been developed for horse packing. Clients do not expect to see major human alteration of the landscape, especially logging.

Hiking is usually compatible with other recreation uses in the area. Uncrowded trails are preferred, particularly those attracted to backcountry hiking. Visual and acoustic quality is important so the quality of the experience is sometimes dependent on other resource users in the hiking areas. There may be some negative effects on sensitive terrain (subalpine/alpine and boggy areas) because of hiking activity. In such situations, preserving both the environmenta and the visitor experience may require special land management and use guidelines to maintain limits of acceptable change.

Wildlife viewing opportunities are a major advantage for all trail activities. Impacts on wildlife can be minimized with appropriate management, but restrictions in very sensitive areas may necessitate designated trails.

7.8.4.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

The acquisition of tenure over trail development and use areas would allow operators to maintain some control over the environment and associated viewscapes. Parks and protected areas may have policies that preclude the use of horses, especially in sensitive areas such as alpine environments and riparian zones which are often scenic and are, therefore, desirable destinations for trail riding and hiking.

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[81] National Survey on Recreation and the Environment, 1994-1995.

Infrastructure needs are not that extensive, but it is important to provide access and maintain a quality trail network, especially near the frontcountry where multi-use activities predominate. Trail activities are very reliant on road access to trailheads and trails that lead to wilderness destinations. Trailheads have to be accessible within a short distance from where vehicles must be parked. Circuit routes are preferred over out-and-back trails.

In general, the better the signage, parking, garbage disposal, washrooms, and interpretative facilities the better the trip experience will be for users. This means quality map information and some investment in public facilities. The private sector is rarely solely responsible for development simply because it does not have the necessary access to the land. Communities have an excellent opportunity to enhance their hiking product, especially in the frontcountry, as it can be developed in conjunction with recreation initiatives.

Features such as fishing, lakes, waterfalls, cabins, wildlife viewing opportunities, historical features etc. can enhance the trail experience. Their absence can also detract from the experience and make product development difficult. For backcountry hiking and backpacking that appeals to enthusiasts, alpine and sub-alpine environments are preferred and the built environment becomes less important.

Many of the preferred (alpine) destinations for this activity often have a very short snow-free season (late June/early July to late September); thus the commercially viable season is small.

7.8.4.4 OVERALL POTENTIAL

Trail riding and hiking have some good potential in the region because of high quality resources, some good trail systems and visitor markets that place a high value on hiking activity. Among visitors to Northwest BC hiking/backpacking is the third most important outdoor activity among non-residents. The potential for commercial hiking tours spans a full range of options from multi-day trekking tours to short interpreted tours of the frontcountry.

Demand will continue to increase for hiking both as a primary activity and as a secondary activity in conjunction with other products. Because of its accessibility, low skill requirements, relative safety and instant appeal, growth rates among North American and European hiking markets are expected to continue to climb even as the overall population ages.

Trail riding is not expected to grow as strongly as hiking but nevertheless maintains an interest level that has yet to be exploited in the region. This may involved linking riding with the ranching/farming sector in the Bulkley Valley. The development of a multi-use trail network, particularly in the Smithers/Telkwa area could involve the shared use of working animals to defray the costs of operation.

While trail development and interpretation is important, building a better trail product in the Bulkley region will also require effective marketing and promotion to attract Highway 16 travellers. The production and distribution of self-guiding aides, including trail books, books, maps and web sites could increase participation levels.

Commercial operators must provide additional value to gain customers, either through a quality experience (not only the hike but interpretation, meals and lodging) and/or adding other desired activities, which the customers cannot do on their own.

Many hiking participants become repeat clients, so increasing the opportunity for new experiences should increase the potential for repeat customers. Communities in the study area have a range of hiking product that they can package with cultural, heritage and other nature-oriented activities. Further interpretation of unique features like the lakes and river system and First Nations would significantly enhance the frontcountry hiking product.

As with the mountaineering and backcountry ski touring products, trail riding and hiking in more remote and high elevation locales could be augmented by hut development, which would allow for multi-day tours, and linkages with higher quality amenities (e.g. accommodation). This product would appeal to the hiking enthusiast market. There is a growing market, especially in the US, for wilderness camping.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA

UNITS:		Bulkley	Western	Northeast
Markets	Demand	**Medium**: high but stable participation rates, good market depth (long-haul, short-haul, overseas)		
	Competition	**Medium-High**: numerous regions with excellent trails, infrastructure and features. Several destination trails provincially.		
	Overall potential	**High**: quality features in close proximity to Smithers/Telkwa/Moricetown.		**Medium**: remoteness a barrier
Impact/ Conflict	Use	**Medium**: multiple trail users in Smithers area but overall low volumes means few conflicts.		
	Community/Social	**Low:** few impacts on resident recreation use.		
Business Develop-ment Needs	Crown tenure	**Low-Medium**: needed only for repeated camping or trail use. Needs increase if permanent structures (e.g. huts) involved.		
	Infrastructure	**Medium**: well-maintained trails, good signage, convenient access.		**High**: basic services and amenities required, trail development.
	Capital	**Low**: camping/cooking gear for overnight use. Animals required for trail riding or llama packing.		
Level of community support		**High**: conforms to community economic development goals.		**High**: conforms to community economic development goals.
Employment opportunities		**Low**: some guiding positions possible, but existing operators have capacity for more business.		
Opportunities		▸ Multi-activity packages with river activities, hiking and nature observation (Blunt Seaton and Moricetown/Cronin for Moricetown, Chapman/ Morin lakes, Telkwa Mts. And Silvern Lakes for hiking, Kitseguecla for trail riding) ▸ Linkages with agri-tourism and dude ranching in the Bulkley Valley ▸ Guided nature and interpretive hiking tours in the frontcountry ▸ Hiking and trail riding tours packaged through local hotels		▸ Multi-activity packages with river activities, hiking, fishing and nature observation such as salmon viewing ▸ Backcountry touring into Bait Range, Mt. Horetzky and Suskwa Pass ▸ Linkages to small lake fishing (Torkelson, Bristol) ▸ Linkages to wildlife viewing (Babine River for bear and salmon, Netalzul Mt. for goats)

7.8.5 High Opportunity Areas

Polygon Names
Babine
Hudson Bay
Ashman Ridge
North Telkwa and South Telkwa[82]
Mooseskin Johnny
Thoen French
Microwave

7.8.6 Summer Trail Products – Suitability Map

On the following page is the tourism suitability map for the Summer Trail products (Exhibit 34).

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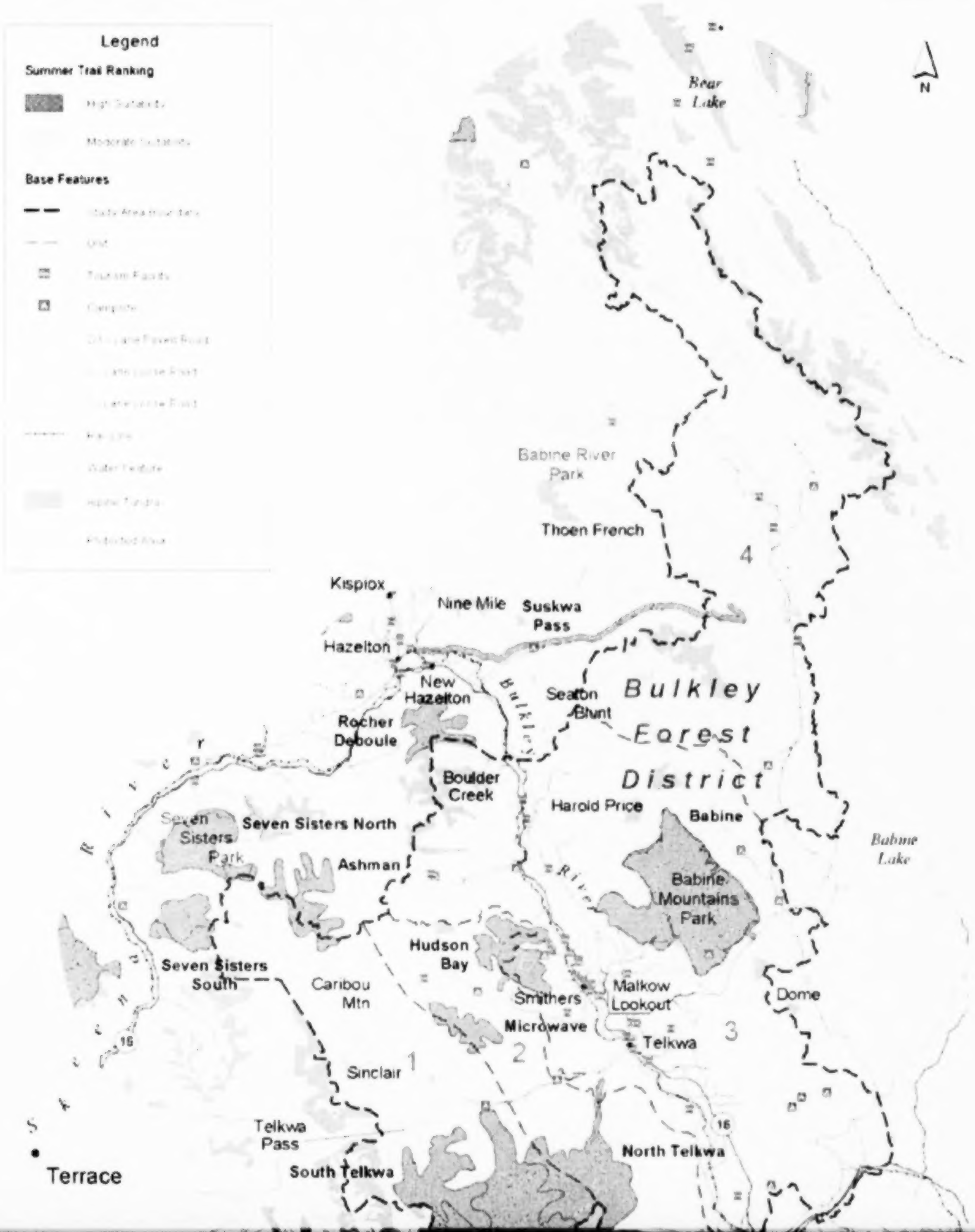
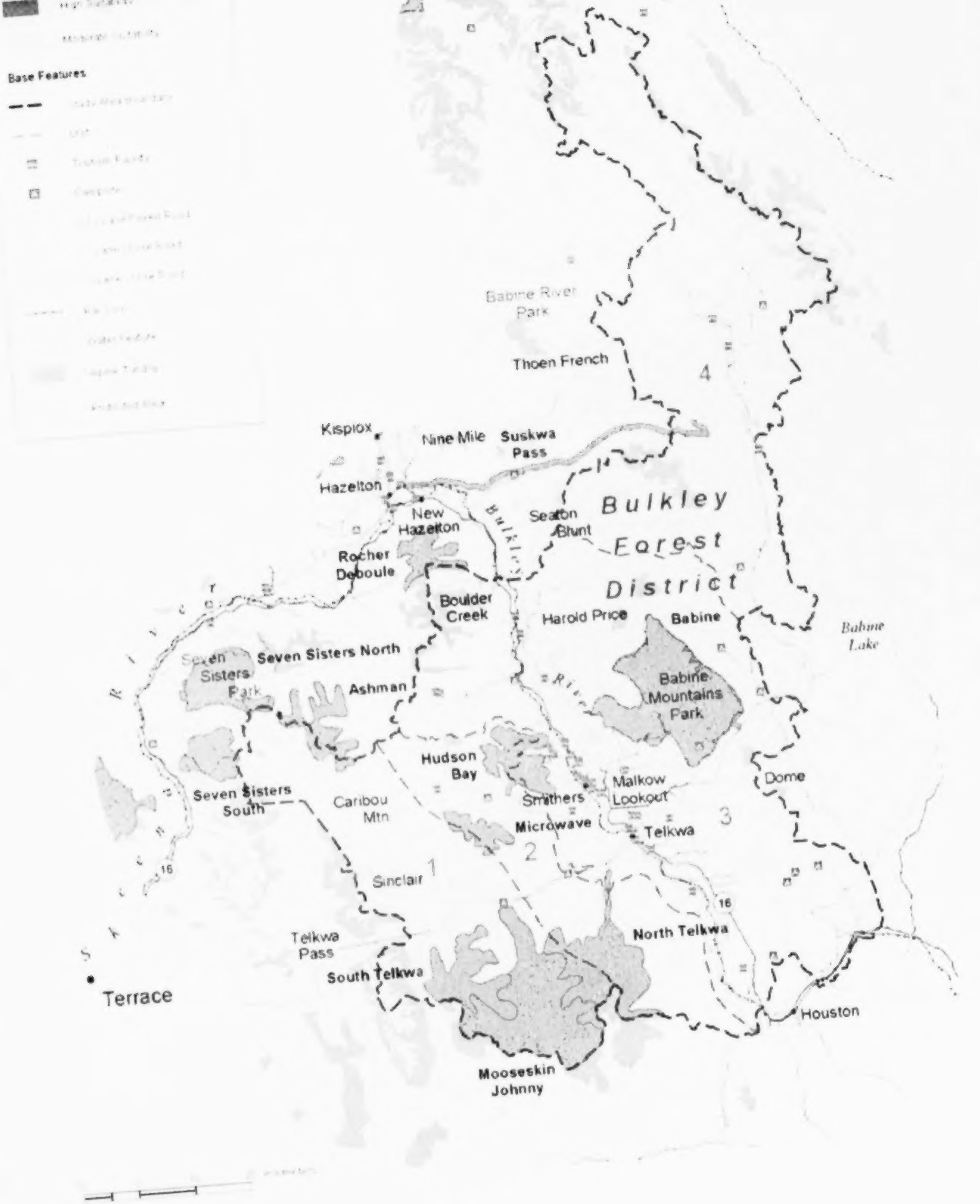
[82] Multi Day

Bulkley Tourism Opportunity Study

Summer Trail Suitability

British Columbia


Legend
Summer Trail Ranking
High Suitability
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Study Area Boundary
Tourism Facility
Campsite
Two Lane Paved Road
Rail Line
Water Feature
Alpine Tundra
Protected Area
N
Bear Lake
Babine River Park
Thoen French
4
Kispiox
Nine Mile
Suskwa Pass
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Rocher Deboule
Seaton Blunt
Bulkley Forest District
Bulkley
Boulder Creek
Harold Price
Babine
Babine Lake
Seven Sisters Park
Seven Sisters North
Ashman
Babine Mountains Park
River
Hudson Bay
Seven Sisters South
Caribou Mtn
Smithers
Malkow Lookout
Dome
Microwave
Telkwa
3
2
1
Sinclair
16
Skeena River
Telkwa Pass
South Telkwa
North Telkwa
Terrace


High Suitability
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Unit
Campsite
Babine River Park
Thoen French
4
Kispiox
Nine Mile
Suskwa Pass
Hazelton
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Seaton Bhunt
Bulkley Forest District
Rocher Deboule
Boulder Creek
Harold Price
Babine
Babine Lake
Seven Sisters Park
Seven Sisters North
Ashman
River
Babine Mountains Park
Hudson Bay
Malkow Lookout
Dome
Seven Sisters South
Caribou Mtn
Smithers
Microwave
Telkwa
3
2
1
Sinclair
16
Telkwa Pass
North Telkwa
South Telkwa
Terrace
Houston
Mooseskin Johnny
Skeena River

7.9 Snowmobiling

7.9.1 Description

Snowmobiling has been increasing in popularity over the past few years. Advancement in design, weight, reliability and horsepower have enabled sledders or snowmobilers to access difficult terrain and to achieve greater speeds and distances. Logging roads have provided access to remote and spectacular mountain ranges. Avalanches, inclement weather, clouds and resulting loss of visibility are hazards that are increasing in profile as sledders continue to push the limits advanced by technology.

7.9.2 Regional Overview

Strengths	Variability of terrain. Dependable snow conditions, trails accessing alpine areas, strong local snowmobile community. Some resolution of motorized/non-motorized conflict has occurred through the RAMP and some indications are out that the RAMP may be revisited to resolve further conflicts.
Weaknesses	Distant markets. Competition in other area of BC (Rocky Mts.). Medium avalanche hazards. Safety concerns.
Concerns	High potential for conflict with other users and with sensitive wildlife habitats. Lack of public sector funding to develop and maintain opportunities. Uncertainties over land management, access and use.

7.9.3 Resource Assessment

The open sub-alpine and alpine ridges in the region favour an array of recreation activities including snowmobiling. Optimal snowfall, outstanding scenery, ready access, a variety of terrain including extensive ridges, bowls, cornice drops, glaciers, icefields, rolling forest and meadows, logging roads, and well-developed and maintained trails establishes the Bulkley Study Area as an attractive region for snowmobilers of all ages and abilities. The best known areas for snowmobiling by unit:

WESTERN UNIT		Suitability
The Western Unit require greater planning and skill level to achieve. Advances in snowmobile technology increase opportunities in the unit. The unit has potential wildlife constraints associated with the Woodland Caribou.		
Caribou	**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine. Small glacier and lakes. Jagged peaks to the west. **Primary Routes:** The west is step and rugged and the east end is rolling. **Comments:** Remote location that can be accessed from McDonnel Lake and Serb Creek. Beautiful views of lakes and mountains. Poor access makes this a backcountry product. **Other winter activities:** Back country ski touring and ski mountaineering.	**H**
Sinclair Range	**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine. Small glacier and lakes. The west is step and rugged and the east end is rolling. **Primary Routes:** Approachable from Telkwa Pass. **Comments:** Beautiful views of lakes and mountains.. **Other winter activities:** Back country ski touring and ski mountaineering.	**H**

Serb Creek	**General Description:** Open marshes and brush. **Primary Routes** Trail that leads to the Caribou Range. **Type of Ski Tour Product:** Backcountry skiing. **Comments:** Open terrain with superb views of surrounding coastal peaks. **Other winter activities:** Back country ski touring.	**H**
South Telkwa	**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine. Small glacier and lakes. East of range lies Mooseskin Johnny Lakes and South Telkwa. High wildlife values (caribou). **Primary Routes:** *Howson Creek* - Old mining road into Mooseskin Johnny Lake area. **Comments:** Can be linked to the North Telkwa range. Access via the Mooseskin Johnny road. Very high concerns for the mountain caribou limit the commercial tourism opportunities. **Other winter activities:** Back country ski touring	**M**
BULKLEY VALLEY AND ADJOINING AREAS		**Suitability**
High opportunities associated to the proximity of Smithers/Telkwa, presence of groomed trails, cabins, wide range of skill opportunities and experiences.		
Babine Range	**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine/ alpine. Glacier, lakes and deep valleys. Gravel roads lead to established trails that extend to sub-alpine. **Primary Routes:** Focus is on the *Big Onion* (with 2 snowmobile cabins, beginner to advanced and the Annual Hill Climb in March). *Ridges above McKendrick Pass* – sometimes has good skiing. *Mt McKendrick* – access from Canyon Creek ski area, suitable and used by snowmobilers **Comments:** Provincial Park with established trails. Active snowmobiling in Big Onion. **Other winter activities:** Back country and light ski touring and snowshoeing	**H**
Dome Mountain	**General Description:** Sub-alpine mountain within at the end of a trail through forest. **Primary Routes:** Dome mountain cross country ski trail leads to a cabin. **Comments:** An all season snowmobile club cabin. Suitable for beginner to intermediate. **Other winter activities:** Light ski touring, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.	
Harold Price	**General Description:** Sub-alpine ridges surrounding a forested valley with open meadow. **Primary Routes:** *Harold Price Trail* cross country ski trail leads to a cabin in a valley. Snowmobilers have another trail in vicinity. **Comments:** The Harold Price meadows are presently under contention with complaints lobbied against snowmobiling by skiers (ski tour). The skiers built a cabin at Harold Price in the late 1980's. The snowmobilers built a cabin in 1999 and use a separate access route but skiers still feel their experience is being compromised by traffic near the older cabin which they are using. **Other winter activities:** Light ski touring, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing.	**H**
Microwave	**General Description:** Many small lakes, ponds, creeks, extensive flower meadows on a subalpine plateau. **Primary Routes:** Winfield Creek road provides access to the subalpine. **Comments:** Road access to alpine and subalpine meadows. Currently high use and very popular with local residents. Cabin at the top, suitable for beginner to advanced. Potential for conflicting use with ski touring. **Other winter activities:** Ski touring.	**H**
North Telkwa	**General Description**: Rounded ridges with rolling sub-alpine /alpine. Small glacier and lakes. Logging roads lead to open terrain. High wildlife values (caribou). **Primary Routes:** *Hunter Basin*- Old mining road to alpine. Possibility of circle route linking the Mooseskin Johnny and Hunter Basin roads. **Comments:** *The Telkwa Range* is easy to access but very high concerns for the mountain caribou limit commercial tourism opportunities. The area adjoining the Smithers side has been subjected to a voluntary closure by MOE for Caribou and the main access being currently used is from the Houston side. Extensive evidence of historical mining activity, great views of the Bulkley Valley from Houston to Moricetown. **Other winter activities:** Ski touring	**H**
Rocher Deboule Range	**General Description:** Dramatic landscape with jagged peaks, steep slopes, alpine, subalpine, small glacier, many cirque basins. **Primary Routes:** *Boulder Creek road* provides access to the alpine. **Comments:** Steep difficult terrain limits opportunities in the Bulkley side of the range. **Other winter activities:** Ski touring (limited)	**L**

Sandstone / Louise and McDonnel Lake	**General Description:** McDonnel Lake is the trailhead to the Sandstone Louise Lakes area. **Primary Routes:** *McDonnel Lake*- access to Serb Valley and the Sandstone / Louis Lake group. Trails around Sandstone Louise. **Comments:** Sandstone Louise offers potential snowmobiling in a forested lakeside setting. **Other winter activities:** Light ski touring, snowshoeing, dogsledding.	**M**
Seaton Blunt	**General Description:** Rounded ridges with extensive rolling sub-alpine and alpine also many rugged cirque talus basins, sharp ridges and gendarmes. **Primary Routes:** *Seaton Ridge*- Steep difficult route through timber to alpine. *Seaton Basin*- Old mining trail access into Seaton Basin. Moderate to difficult. **Comments:** Open rolling terrain enhance the snowmobiling product. **Other winter activities:** Light Ski Touring and backcountry ski touring.	**H**
THE NORTHEAST		**Suitability**
Distant locations with few alpine areas. Remote ranges such as the Scicintine are difficult to access.		
Sicintine	**General Description:** Remote dramatic landscape with extensive ridges with rolling alpine / sub-alpine, jagged peaks, small lakes & wetlands, steep slopes (valleys), glaciers, Shelagyote Peak and glacial features including morraines, outwash plains and braided streams. **Primary Routes:** nil **Comments:** Remote, difficult to access, primitive area with extensive glaciers. Avalanche considerations in the valleys. Remoteness requires a driving time of close to two hours plus several hours sledding to access good terrain. There are a small number of enthusiasts who do use this area particularly in the spring when snow conditions make access easier. **Other winter activities:** Backcountry Ski Touring, Ski mountaineering.	**H**

Conflicts between motorized and non.motorized users is expected to increase over time. Snowmobiles, due to technological advances are extending to many areas previously unsuitable for snowmobiling. Conflicts with other users, in particular the ski tour enthusiasts, is increasing. Complaints about snowmobiles include the tracking of fresh snow, the noise and smell of exhaust. Snowmobilers contend that with the exception of "play" areas, their tracks are linear and not obtrusive and in fact can assist the skiers in areas with deep powder. The noise and smells, they rebut, are fleeting.

7.9.4 Market and Socio-economic Assessment

7.9.4.1 MARKETS

The snowmobile market is evenly distributed amongst age groups, with a significant portion 35 and over (60.1%). Almost three quarters are male and half travel with friends. While the median age is 41, many younger people are being introduced into the activity through family outings. While the activity has traditionally been male-dominated, there are an increasing number of women, couples, retirees and families participating associated with the general increase in the soft adventure market.

Recent statistics generated by the Resort Municipality of Whistler show snowmobile clients to be in the 30-40 year age range, 40% of which are Japanese with the majority of the remainder American.[63] This group is classified as participants who are taking on snowmobiling as a day activity as a part of longer trip involving other activities. They do not have their own snowmobiles and require gear as well as basic operating and safety instruction. Guided snowmobile tours, usually lasting from two to three hours, appeal to non-skiing visitors, skiers looking for an alternative to the slopes, or as an après ski activity.

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[63] The Sea to Sky CBR Opportunities Study, p.42, SVI. Environments, Consultant.

There are two major snowmobile segments: enthusiasts and participants. Snowmobiling ***enthusiasts*** are those who engage in the activity several times a year. Enthusiasts are more likely to live near areas that have good snowmobiling terrain, own snowmobiles and be part of a local snowmobiling club or association. There are those who seek hard or extreme adventure and will look for challenging terrain that includes untracked powder, jumps, and "powder play areas" – large, open areas with high snowfall. They enjoy the experience of high performance snowmobiles. Another group are the "travelers", who enjoy snowmobiles as a means of getting access to wilderness and other town destinations while enjoying the outdoors. ***Participants*** often take on snowmobiling as a day activity as a part of longer trip involving other activities such as downhill skiing. They will not have their own snowmobiles and will require gear as well as basic operating and safety instruction. Participants will value the scenery and wildlife viewing opportunities in addition to the thrill of operating the snowmobile. Participants will go on guided tours whereas enthusiasts are more likely to plan a trip on their own. All the groups enjoy well-maintained, integrated network of trails for touring to interesting and unique destinations.

In the Bulkley district most visiting snowmobilers are from within the Northwest region, and based on the available market information, the best future opportunities will be with this target group. However, this market is self-guided and is not likely to be a major purchaser of guiding services. The majority have their own equipment and gas, food and accommodation services when they visit the region.

Competition is not that significant in the region, as most snowmobilers are self-guided. On a provincial basis, snowmobilers have a broad choice of destinations. The BC Snowmobile Federation is active in building a province-wide trail network much like exists in Ontario and this will improve access to quality terrain in affected communities, but it will also increase participation. The keys to creating a competitive product (e.g. good snow conditions, variable terrain, integrated and well-signed/maintained trail systems, and access to higher alpine terrain and scenic destinations) are present in the Bulkley. A new operator offering guiding services would have to create a new market either by bringing in new visitors, or converting existing visitors to buyers of value-added services.

Snowmobiling is growing extremely fast, perhaps more so than any other outdoor activity, motorized or non-motorized. The increased demand and use is coming from residents, regional visitors and short-haul visitors. The downside for the Bulkley is the distance from any large regional populations. This puts a limit on commercial opportunities and will force interested operators to tap into the growing demand among other winter visitors (especially downhill skiers) who may be interested in snowmobiling as a secondary activity.

7.9.4.2 IMPACTS/CONFLICTS

Land use and resource management is a major issue for snowmobiling, particularly where competing use pressures are high. While this is not a major factor in the study area at this time, snowmobilings rising popularity may create use pressures in the future. Land/resource managers can provide some assistance for resolving conflicts, with changes in legislation and policy, but there are really no mechanisms for forcing commercial operators (tenured and untenured), resident snowmobilers and unguided visiting snowmobilers to keep out of each others' way. Solutions are most likely to be worked out amongst the user groups themselves.

The BC Snowmobile Federation BCSF has been negotiating with the Land Use Coordination Office (LUCO) for a provincial trail network, changes to improve safety for snowmobilers, changes to make it easier for snowmobilers to operate legally (e.g. crossing highways) and changes to allow local interests to secure and maintain snowmobile trails. Legislative and policy changes are now being discussed with LUCO. The BCSF has also been lobbying heavily to prevent restricted access owing to last year's red listing of mountain caribou in BC. All commercial recreation activities that occur on provincial crown land are subject to the Interim Wildlife Guidelines for Commercial Recreation.[84] Adherence with these guidelines will be required. In the Bulkley, snowmobile activity is being assessed and controlled in some areas to prevent impacts on goat populations.

Caribou habitat and populations are sensitive issues in the study area and there has been some conflict noted with snowmobiling. As noted in the LRMP, the dwindling Telkwa caribou herd has seen its numbers drop dramatically in the last two decades. Although the causes are not agreed upon, over-hunting in the 1960s, chronic poor recruitment of calves due to predation, and range abandonment due to human-caused disturbances, particularly snow machines in winter are all believed to be factors. Province-wide environmental initiatives for caribou habitat management could also have a limiting affect on product development. The species has now been red-listed by the province and this will result in further access restrictions, although the BCSF has been lobbying heavily against these.

7.9.4.3 BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Critical needs in the region include accommodation, trail infrastructure and event development. Tenure is not a critical issue because the amount of commercial guiding is low. Nearby accommodation, particularly if it provides direct access to trails, is a great advantage for capturing snowmobile business. Quality après snowmobile activities are a growing requirement for destination snowmobilers. In addition, adequate and secure parking is a requirement as expensive tow vehicles and trailers are left for long periods of time. Warm-up huts and cabins are a bonus for day riders and a requirement for multi-day hut-to-hut tours. Good signage is important for both convenience and safety reasons. An operations base is needed for repairs and maintenance. Fuel storage is another important requirement, both at the operations base and remote fuelling locations. Trailers and tow vehicles are needed for hauling to and from trailheads.

Avalanches, inclement weather, clouds and resulting loss of visibility are hazards that are increasing in profile as sledders continue to push the limits advanced by technology. As the areas considered suitable for snowmobiling expand in the backcountry, there is a corresponding increase in danger related to natural occurrences such as avalanches. Only 5 to 15 percent of snowmobile incidents occur on well-maintained, designated trails where 80 to 90 percent of snowmobiling takes place.[85] Operators have to be cognizant of their safety procedures and liability protection.

7.9.4.4 OVERALL POTENTIAL

The large snowfall, the allure of high alpine "powder" snowmobiling areas and the remote and spectacular scenery are all significant advantages for the Bulkley district. The fact that Smithers and

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[84] Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks, *Interim Wildlife Guidelines for Commercial Recreation*, November, 2000

[85] "Snowmobiling Safety", Snowmobiling American Council of Snowmobile Associations website.

Telkwa are so close to major snowmobile areas is a bonus. However, overall potential is limited because of distance to markets. Local development will not simply be a matter of trying to attract more sledders. Existing participants have to be convinced to purchase either guiding services or lease equipment and gear. Operators and the hospitality sector will have to add value and service to the snowmobiling experience. There is a need to improve infrastructure and hospitality services to encourage longer and more frequent trips. For commercial development, access to high quality alpine destinations is very important – access that is restricted or too distant will deter investment.

Snowmobiling is often seen as having significant negative affects on the backcountry in terms of conflicts with other users and the environment. Regulation and designation of areas and routes may occur in the future and limit development, but this should not be an issue in the near-term as use conflicts are low.

Snowmobilers have expressed the need for the development of codes of conduct for all users, and the provision and enforcement of safety standards and emergency shelters for users. Initiatives being pursued by the BCSF could be picked up by local stakeholders as a means of promoting better and safer snowmobile experiences in their communities.

MARKET & SOCIO-ECONOMIC CRITERIA

UNITS:		**Bulkley**	**Western**	**Northeast**
Markets	Demand	**Medium**: fast growing participation among regional and short-haul markets		
	Competition	**Medium-High**: most communities are developing their trail systems and actively packaging		
	Overall potential	**Low-Medium**: Excellent resources, diversity and proximity, but too distant from major markets		**Low**: lack of resources and remoteness a barrier
Impact/ Conflict	Use	**Medium**: large land areas required, which may conflict with park, wildlife and other zoning restrictions		
	Community / Social	**Medium**: development is acceptable to residents, except where visitor use begins to impact their own recreation experience		
Business Develop-ment Needs	Crown tenure	**High**: repeated commercial use would require tenure over a large area		
	Infrastructure	**Low**: existing access and development in key areas (Big Onion & Dome) is excellent		**High**: access, parking, service and accommodation needed
	Capital	**Medium**: costs of equipment can be offset by rentals		
Level of community support		**Medium**: conforms to community and LRMP planning guidelines		**Medium**: conforms to community and LRMP planning guidelines
Employment opportunities		**Medium**: guiding, hospitality and service (e.g. fuel and repair) positions could be created depending on volumes		
Opportunities		▸ Snowmobiling (guided/unguided) ▸ Event development ▸ Accommodation ▸ Enhanced infrastructure (Microwave, Sinclair Range) ▸ Snowmobile instruction		▸ Snowmobiling (guided/unguided) ▸

7.9.5 High Opportunity Areas

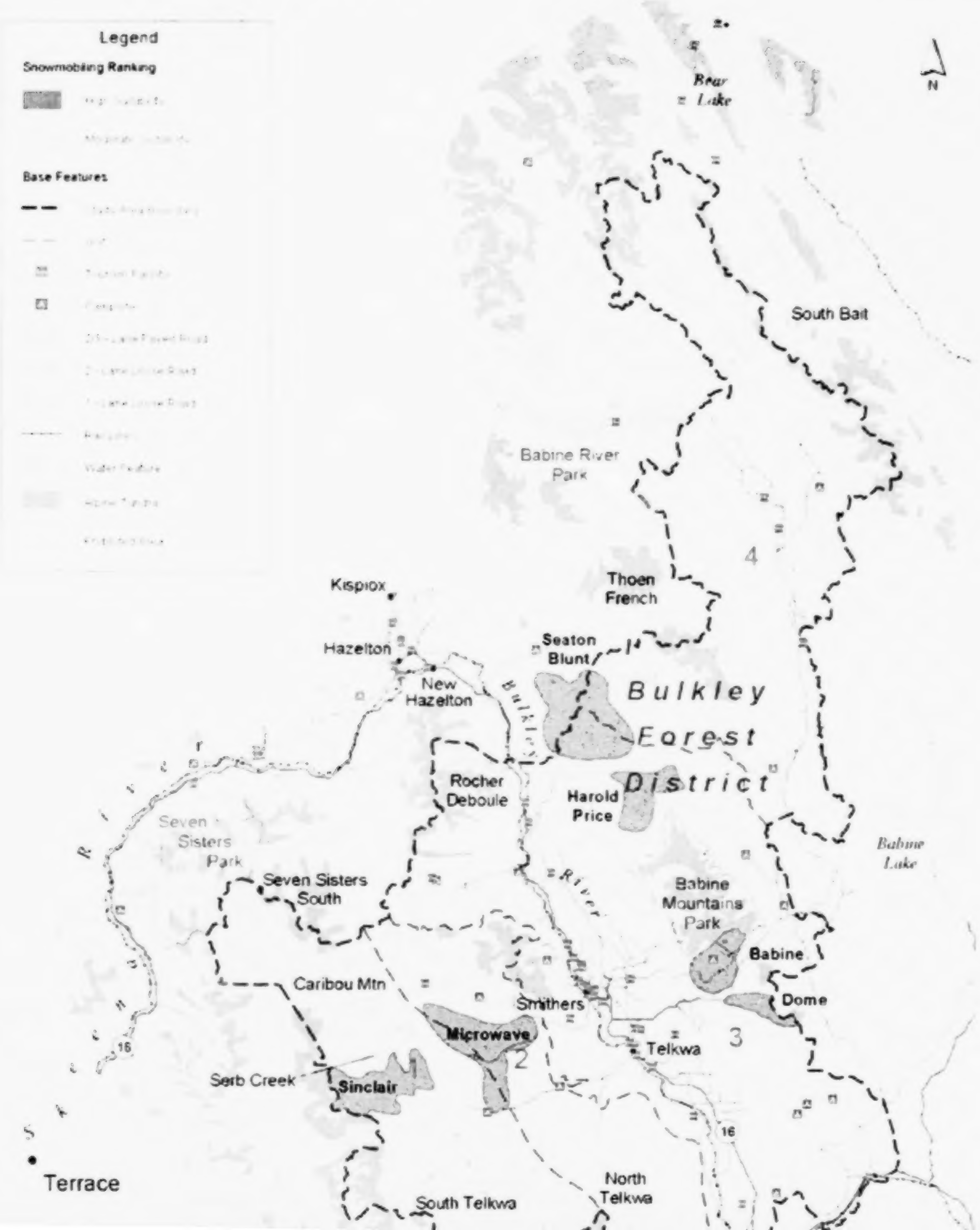
Polygon Names
South Babine
Dome Mt
Sinclair
Microwave
Harold Price
Blunt Seaton

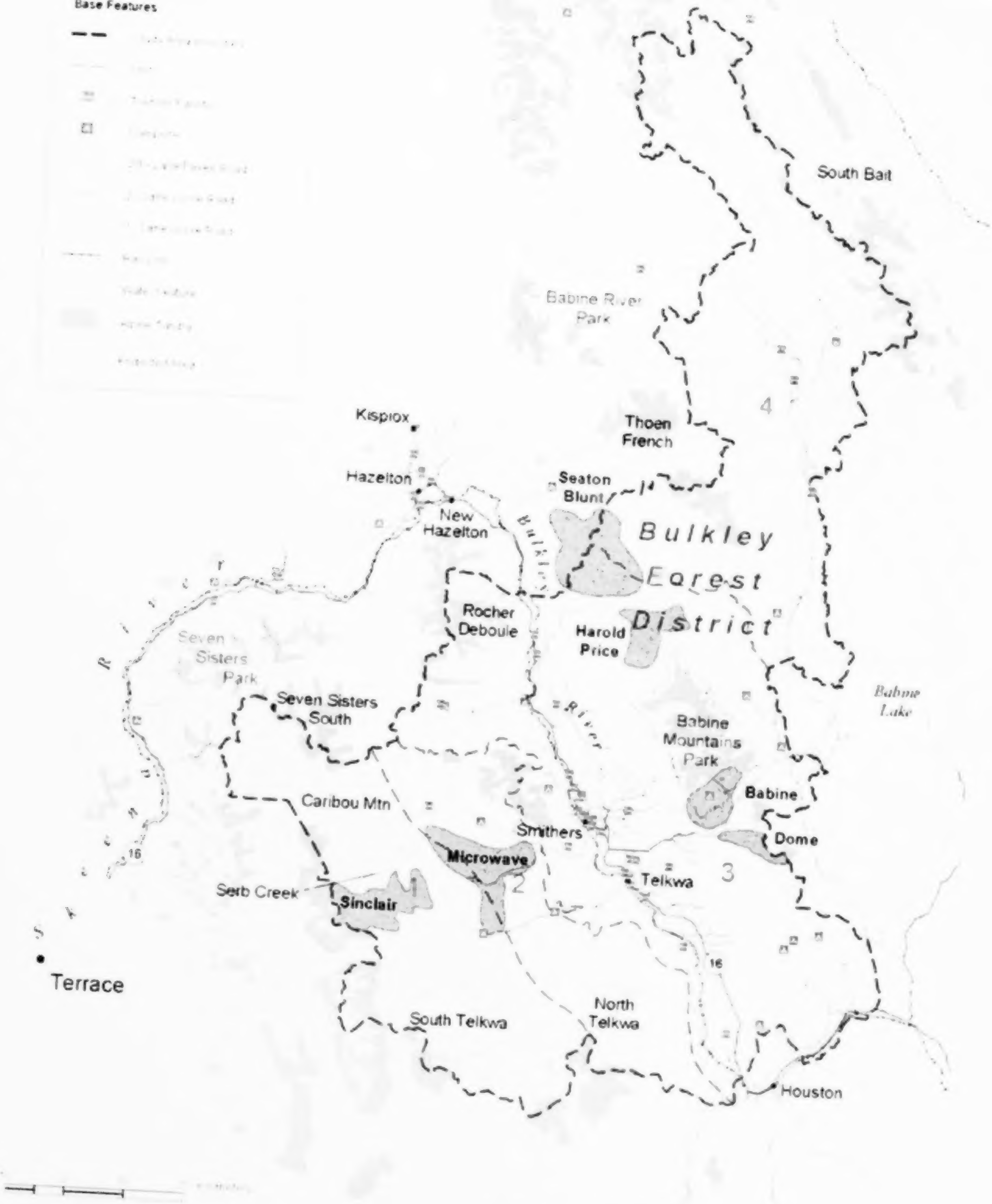
7.9.6 Snowmobiling – Suitability Map

On the following page is the tourism suitability map for the Snowmobiling product (Exhibit 35).

Bulkley Tourism Opportunity Study

Snowmobiling Suitability


Legend
Snowmobiling Ranking
High Suitability
Moderate Suitability
Base Features
Study Area Boundary
Unit
Tourism Facility
Campsite
2/3+ Lane Paved Road
2 Lane Loose Road
1 Lane Loose Road
Railway
Water Feature
Alpine Tundra
Protected Area
N
Bear Lake
South Bait
Babine River Park
4
Thoen French
Kispiox
Hazelton
Seaton Blunt
New Hazelton
Bulkley
Bulkley Forest District
Rocher Deboule
Harold Price
Seven Sisters Park
Seven Sisters South
River
Babine Lake
Babine Mountains Park
Babine
Dome
Caribou Mtn
Smithers
Microwave
2
Telkwa
3
16
Serb Creek
Sinclair
Skeena River
Terrace
North Telkwa
South Telkwa


Base Features
South Bait
Babine River Park
4
Thoen French
Kispiox
Hazelton
Seaton Blunt
New Hazelton
Bulkley Forest District
Bulkley
Rocher Deboule
Harold Price
Seven Sisters Park
Seven Sisters South
River
Babine Lake
Babine Mountains Park
Babine
Dome
Caribou Mtn
Smithers
Microwave
2
Telkwa
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Serb Creek
Sinclair
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16
Skeena River
Terrace
South Telkwa
North Telkwa
Houston

Chapter
8

8 Tourism Action Plans

The previous chapter focused on opportunities related to product development. This chapter deals with broader tourism and community development issues that have implications for product development. The focus is on correcting weaknesses and gaps that may impede development. Without the basic building blocks of economic development, communities will find it difficult to attract and grow the investment, entrepreneurship, labour and infrastructure needed to create high value tourism.

8.1 Issues Overview

There is a steadily growing global market for adventure and wilderness-related tourism products, and that the Bulkley Plan Area has specific features to attract a share of this market. The key development challenges are:

- To develop the local commitment to capitalize on the most promising opportunities.
- To prepare the most promising products for the market.
- To develop quality products that will be competitive regionally and nationally.
- To attract the financing and investment capital required for the development of suitable tourism opportunities.

The consultants have heard from numerous community stakeholders on their goals and objectives for the tourism sector in the Bulkley Plan Area. The key community challenges are to:

- Develop adventure products in a manner that protects community values (ie., environmental and recreational) and maximizes community participation in terms of ownership and employment.
- Expands the economic benefits derived from tourism development within the local communities.

8.2 Issues Scan

Several key issues were identified during the course of this project by the consulting team either through research, analysis or direct input from community stakeholders and tourism operators. The project team believes these issues should be addressed in further product development planning if the Bulkley Plan Area is to develop its tourism industry in a manner consistent with community and tourism industry needs. The following points have been raised across the region:

1. Communities in the Bulkley Plan Area have identified tourism as a key future economic activity and each community has been working on specific tourism initiatives over the past several years. The communities are becoming more involved in the processes and activities associated with tourism development. The communities recognize the utility of economic diversification into tourism, and have expressed a desire to have tourism contribute to their local economies.

2. In some communities, local residents, particularly those not directly employed by the tourism industry, must show support towards tourism development. Some residents remain sceptical towards the value of tourism and transmit a negative attitude towards tourists. There is concern about the impact that local tourism will bring to the area. Additional educational efforts may be required to show the positive economic impact of tourism for the region and community discussions must occur to explore solutions to local concerns.

3. Tourism stakeholders have identified the tenure process for operating on Crown Land and the number of different agencies that operators must deal with in conducting their tourism venture as a barrier to effectively moving tourism opportunities forward in a timely and efficient fashion. This has made it difficult for tourism opportunities to undertake the investments they need to fully capitalize on identified tourism opportunities.

4. Representatives in the communities have identified several transportation issues as one of the primary impediments to tourism development locally. The lack of trails and signage to several key tourism features has been identified as limiting access for tourists coming to the area. As well, air transportation costs are high and this is reducing the competitiveness of the region's tourism operators.

5. There needs to be better cooperation between local organizations and tourism interests. Ways need to be explored to collaborate over the use and development of specific areas in the region. Currently various groups are in competition when there may be opportunities to accommodate several tourism and recreation objectives in the same area.

6. Throughout the Bulkley Plan Area there are several tourism products currently being developed or considered by several communities. Effort should be given to ensuring that the communities in the region work collaboratively to develop connected and complementary products to offer the touring public.

7. Some of the products identified in this report will require a significant capital investment. Clearly, attracting this kind of capital will be a challenge. An investor will be seeking the best return on investment and minimal risk exposure. The investment decision will be influenced by factors such as the market for the product, the competition, the security of the land base, the location of the venture, and the entrepreneur's experience in the sector. Community and government support will be necessary to create a favourable investment climate.

8. It appears that in some instances that different organizations involved in tourism have not been able to work in a collaborative fashion to benefit the regional tourism sector. As well, while it has been relayed that tourism is a high priority with the communities in the region, key personnel do not have enough resources to properly pursue goals and objectives that they would like to undertake in the tourism sector.

8.3 Regional and Community Recommendations

This section deals with broader tourism and community development issues that cut across geographic boundaries as well as community-specific area of action.

8.3.1 Cooperating on Implementation

Study area communities have a mixed record on implementing economic development plans over the years. Part of the problem comes from uneven support for the development function and the heavy reliance on volunteer contributions instead of hired, professional personnel. At the same time, there have been many successes with community groups such as the Community Resources Board formed out the Bulkley LRMP consistently contributing to the formulation and implementation of the LRMP. The Office of the Wet'suwet'en has been very involved in the last few years planning and organization economic development initiatives in a variety of areas. The major challenge for this TOS is that some form of implementation occurs, either in whole or in part, by the community. Without the commitment to action the strategy will be unable to generate the results the community needs to diversify its economy. The inability of the provincial government to commit to community economic development initiatives means that the onus is now more than even on individual communities to drive development. There is reasonably good implementation capacity in the Bulkley region, with active economic development offices, chambers of commerce, tourism operators and recreation groups.

8.3.1.1 KEY ACTIONS:

- Distribute the TOS, opportunity information and map resources to economic development agencies, chambers and the Office of the Wet'suwet'en to gauge interest in implementation.
- Consider the coordination of a broader regional approach in cooperation with the Kispiox TOS. This could involve organizing a meeting among community groups and First Nations to establish a coordinating mechanism for implementation of region-wide tasks.
- A one-year action plan could be developed with established completion dates for high priority initiatives. This could be done through a region-wide workshop to have participants discuss their priorities. The workshop would be a good way to have communities become familiar with the strategy and take interest and ownership in those elements that affect them.
- Encourage the creation of a Bulkely Valley Tourism Organization as recommended in the 1998 Smithers Community Economic Development Strategy.
- Work with key senior government agencies to implement tourism development. These agencies need to be active participants in addressing key local tourism issues. As well government agencies need to be encouraged to proactively inform local tourism operators and organizations of the programs, projects and government policies that impact tourism. Some of the key government agencies and service organizations that could play a role in the development of tourism initiatives and tourism business development include:
    - British Columbia Assets and Lands Corporation
    - Community Futures Development Corporations

- BC Ministry Sustainable Resource Management
- BC Ministry of Forests
- Northern Development Commission
- Forest Renewal BC
- Human Resources Development Canada
- BC Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers
- Tourism British Columbia
- BC Parks
- Upper Skeena Tourism Council
- Northern British Columbia Tourism Association
- University of Northern British Columbia
- Northwest Community College

8.3.2 Community Support and Cooperation

Community support and cooperation underpins sustainable outdoor adventure tourism development because of the latter's dependence on the land and resource base. All tourism needs local support, but particularly nature-based tourism because the community also prizes the resources most valued by tourists. Therefore, tourism operators must strive to involve the community in project planning, and vice versa, the community must work with the tourism industry to ensure community values and interests are incorporated in the development process.

At the same time, many tourism development issues should be dealt with at a regional level rather than by individual communities. Collaborating and identifying initiatives of mutual benefit could improve the planning environment and save resources.

8.3.2.1 KEY ACTIONS:

- Work with councillors and other elected officials to understand the growing importance of tourism to the local economy. This is more important than ever with the current problems faced by the forestry and mining sectors, traditionally key supports for the local economy.
- Communities should compare and share tourism strategy information and identify areas for collaboration, especially where issues are regional in nature, such as transportation, infrastructure and highway signage.
- Prepare an annual report card on the progress of tourism development in the region, identifying and tracking project developments and communicating these to media contacts and stakeholders.
- Consider developing a "tourist in your own town program" program for Smithers.
- Identify opportunities where major industry (e.g. forest companies) can collaborate with tourism operators on tourism projects.

8.3.3 First Nations Tourism Development

First Nations tourism, where aboriginal people are directly involved through control or having their culture serve as the primary attraction, is growing at a rate up to five times faster than the conventional tourism industry. Turning that growth to local advantage will require First Nations control of tourism development and the building of effective relationships between tourism operators and aboriginal communities. Tourism then has the potential to stimulate economic and social development and provide a mechanism for re-establishing aboriginal approaches to land use and resource management. This is already happening in the Kitlope (Haisla) and the Queen Charlottes (Haida). More activity along these lines will help rebuild capacity within First Nations communities, affirm cultural values and traditions, empower and strengthen community pride, create employment, generate revenue, provide training and educational opportunities and facilitate cultural exchange. In other words, tourism development can lead to overall community development.

There is an opportunity in the study area for achieving First Nations tourism development through the creation of partnerships, networking and relationships that will bring together all available regional assets into a single development path.

8.3.3.1 KEY ACTIONS:

- Encourage linkages between aboriginal tourism organizations, including the Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia, the Canadian National Aboriginal Tourism Association, and Aboriginal Tourism Team Canada (part of the Canadian Tourism Commission).
- Investigate uses for programs currently offered to meet assist First Nations tourism development, including the BC government's Visions for the Future, a series of career development conferences for aboriginal youth, and the Royal BC Museum's Aboriginal Cultural Stewardship Program for aboriginal youth interested in working in native culture interpretation.
- Encourage the implement a visitor services program in cooperation with the Office of the Wet'suwet'en. Most visitors to the study area have no awareness or understanding of whether or not they can visit IRs and the protocol and costs of doing so. A communications program can raise awareness and lower the risk visitors might perceive when travelling the area. One suggestion is to establish protocols for acceptable use, determining which sites are and are not suitable for tourism use, the types of use allowed and a fee structure, if appropriate. Some of these issues are addressed in the discussion on Land and Resource Management that follows. Once standards are established, they have to be communicated to the travelling public. This can be accomplished through various means, including
  - A coordinated signage program on trails and sites.
  - A map-based web page profiling important sites and use information.
  - Brochures and maps for distribution to Travel Info Centres, chambers of commerce and accommodation facilities in the region.
  - Central visitor centre(s) within major communities where travellers can go to obtain information on IRs and other tourism products/services.
  - An email list of key partners and contacts which can be used for issuing press releases and other communications activities.

- A list operators, wholesalers, motorcoach services and transportation companies for direct mail notifying them of IR tourism use. The mail out could also be used to encourage partnership development.
- Ensure band and economic development offices are fully aware of protocols and procedures so they can provide information if required.

8.3.4 Networking

In the Bulkley region, existing and potential tourism operators have only weak business networks through which they can make referrals or share information. Building business networks and linkages can generate significant economic development opportunities as well as cost savings for businesses. This is especially true in the Bulkley region where access and infrastructure deficiencies raise the cost of doing business. Better workforce training linkages, the establishment of mutual infrastructure (e.g. trail systems), the development of local supplier networks, and cooperative marketing are some of the achievements possible through network development. The sharing of strategic planning information, from outlining key business objectives to explaining the obstacles in building critical social and economic ties to the community can benefit all communities in the region, including First Nations.

8.3.4.1 KEY ACTIONS:

- Work with all communities in the region to prepare a regional tourism database (e.g. Product Guide), using the TOS reports from the Bulkley and the Kispiox as source data. All operators could use the Product Guide as a resource for encouraging more networking and packaging.
- Investigate the creation of a visitor pass with money-saving coupons from attractions, lodging and dining establishments in Smithers and Telkwa. Tourism businesses can be asked to provide incentives such as percentage discounts, 2-for-1 offers or value-added gift items. In return, participating businesses benefit from increased traffic and visibility through the passes. Usage restrictions can be applied by season and by day.
- Local economic development agencies such as Community Futures could publish a best practices guide in ecotourism business development form both aboriginal and non-aboriginal perspectives.
- Investigate the feasibility of forming a "Product Club" with area operators, the Office of the Wet'suwet'en and the Nat'oot'en (Fort Babine). The Product Club program[86] is administered by the Canadian Tourism Commission for the purpose of encouraging tourism consortia to develop market-ready products. A consortium of small and medium-sized businesses agree to work together in order to develop new tourism products or enhance existing products which will collectively address issues that are impeding the growth of tourism in a given area or industry sector. A typical Product Club is an independent entity, which could include outfitters, tour operators or tourism associations. Research (on markets, products, and initiatives in other jurisdictions), workshops/seminars for club members, developing a product development plan, developing a sales strategy, and communication tools (e.g. newsletters, meetings) are examples of supported ventures. A meeting could be held with outdoor tourism stakeholders to gauge the

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[86] http://www.canadatourism.com/en/ctc/partner_centre/shortcutindex.cfm?info=productclubs/productindex.html, (613) 946-1000.

level of interest in forming a product club. The Product Club will create year-round barrier-free touring packages through an enhanced communication strategy, research to identify market potential, and a model that can be used in other regions. A proposal call for Product Club submissions will be issued in Autumn 2001.

8.3.5 Land and Resource Management

The management of the Crown land base for tourism purposes is becoming increasingly complex, especially as demand and use rises. There are several issues that have to be considered.

Conflicts among user groups are growing and this may negatively impact future tourism development, if it is not doing so now. In the Bulkley study area, for example, access plans and user agreements have been worked out to manage the situation. It may be that some areas should not be promoted for tourism due to local residents' concerns regarding cultural sensitivity, carrying capacity, environmental sensitivity, or the need to have a place of their own. Overcrowding is an issue at several recreation venues and site degradation is occurring. The installation of additional facilities or the establishment and enforcement of regulations may be required to disperse use. In cases where site degradation has occurred, rehabilitation may be required. Although most areas will be able to support greater use, specific sites may be overused.

Increasing signs of industrial activity, together with things like garbage and vandalism, detract from the overall tourism experience and will have to be resolved before the area develops a negative reputation. At risk is the perception that because of its relative remoteness and lack of development, the area is a pristine wilderness.

Cultural eco-tourism can be a major economic and social stimulant for the region and First Nations' communities, but it is not without its risks. There are many opportunities to differentiate outdoor adventure products and activities from the competition by incorporating traditional uses, language, art, legends and value systems as a bridge to the past. Such a re-discovery can fulfill social/community goals as well as benefit tourism development and even the environment. But if culture is to form part of the local eco-tourism product, then steps should be taken to ensure it is respected rather than exploited.

Finally, recreation and tourism resources need to be allocated and managed within the context of other uses, such as aquaculture, forestry and conservation. Many uses require space, based on needs to protect environmental resources or to promote economic benefits. Ultimately, the ideal situation would be to determine the "highest and best use" for each area, ensuring that the needs of all uses are met. Planning efforts from time to time undertake this exercise. The Bulkley LRMP has made some progress in this regard, but further detailed planning is required.

The whole idea of addressing these issues is to encourage outdoor adventure business development. Timely and accurate information should be channelled to entrepreneurs and investors about the availability of land resources. This may be serviced municipal land and buildings needed as a base of business, or it could be Crown tenure for a backcountry area in which to conduct tours. It could even be partnership opportunities with First Nations. In all cases, helping operators navigate through the development maze will stimulate new investment and reflect positively on the community's business climate.

8.3.5.1 KEY ACTIONS:

- Encourage land management agencies involved with sub-regional land use planning to endorse the strategy and actively manage for tourism values. This could include viewscape maintenance, especially in special management zones as designated by the Bulkley LRMP. It could also mean pressuring provincial agencies to increase their surveillance and enforce compliance of visitor and operator activity within the existing guidelines. The size of the landscape, extensive number of access and entry points, moderate levels of use and lack of available staff may prevent action at this time, but future enforcement measures may be needed as recreation and tourism pressures increase. Issues such as illegal guiding activity, especially in sport fishing, have been a long-standing problem in the region. Ensuring that the community is part of the for BCAL CR tenures process is also advisable. Having articulated tourism and recreation planning directions and guidelines, communities should be involved in the monitoring process to ensure government agencies are following through in their decision-making.
- Work with First Nations to define and articulate a cultural code of ethics to be followed in the development of eco-tourism businesses. This would include setting rules for respecting and protecting sacred components and for deciding when different aspects of culture can be shared.
- Work with local economic development agencies to investigate preparing an inventory of municipal sites suitable for conversion or new development. This could expand into a backcountry site guide that identifies the highest value tourism activity areas, using map resources generated by this study as well as the Bulkley LRMP. The maps could be modified and printed in such a way as to direct visitors and operators to those areas deemed most acceptable for use. Local economic development agencies could work with BCALC on this initiative. The idea of actively identifying and promoting sites with favourable development prospects makes sense in terms of land use and investment attraction. For agencies such as BCALC, such a product is valuable because it has a chance to review and pre-approve sites that may be targeted in applications for Crown land tenure and sale. For communities and regional districts, the guide could be featured in their marketing and attraction programs, as well as assist with the forecasting and planning for future infrastructure and services. The initial focus could be on backcountry resorts or lodges, or alpine huts/lodges with high quality resources, no use pressures and high probability for tenure.
- Distribute a tourism investor's handbook, which would provide a step-by-step guide for dealing with the regulatory process, but particularly land, use issues.
- Coordinate community infrastructure investments around sustainability objectives. Such approaches will minimize visitor impacts and protect the ecological integrity of the key sites.

8.3.6 Tourism Business Development

The last twenty years have seen a dramatic rise in consumer awareness of the concept of product quality. The private sector has found that high-quality products are demanded by consumers and are an important component of market advantage. A widespread problem in outdoor adventures tourism is the assurance of information accuracy, of quality interpretation, of levels of safety, of operational integrity and of adherence to impact rules. Consumers look for such assurance, and any deficiency in these areas may inhibit use.

There is no rating system in place for informing tourists about the quality of experience provided by operators. The 1997 Visitor Study showed a significant number of travellers to the Northwest were less than highly satisfied with the value for money they were getting on their trips. Many visitor markets do not mind spending more money if they can be assured that they will receive quality services and experiences in return. The accommodation industry has a basic system in place through the BC Accommodation Guide program, but no such system exists for outdoor tourism operators. Those operators who provide a poor quality experience to travellers hurt the reputation of the entire tourism industry. Local tourism operators can define peer standards as the minimum required standards for a quality experience.

At present there are few standards regarding guide qualifications or insurance for many types of guided activities. Some industry segments, such as rafting, are self-regulating, but most others are not. Even in a self-regulating system there is nothing to prevent an operator from outside the industry to "open shop" and not follow the existing guidelines. The lack of standards is of particular concern for higher risk activities like backcountry hiking and skiing.

8.3.6.1 KEY ACTIONS:

- Investigate the feasibility of operator accreditation locally. Although it is not widespread in Canada or BC, accreditation of eco-certified tourism operators and lodgings will become more than a passing phenomenon as the industry and travel markets mature. The certification trend is sweeping through the forest industry and similar events will occur in tourism as the availability of travel options increase and travellers find it more difficult to ascertain whether or not their purchases conform to their own nations of sustainability. There are a handful of programs available and some jurisdictions like Australia (considered the world leader in ecotourism planning and accreditation) have formalized nation-wide industry standards and programs. Communities in the Bulkley region should be assisting with accreditation research and encouraging their tourism operators to develop and maintain sustainability programs.
- Create tourism opportunity lists, using this report as a base line. The list could identify tourism enterprises that do not currently exist in the region, or are under-represented, and for which there is enough apparent demand to support a business. Such as list does not have to be restricted to outdoor adventure enterprises. As the region has a lack of capacity and support services, infrastructure needs should also be listed. Population thresholds needed to support various small tourism support businesses could be prepared. Such an assessment would help local entrepreneurs identify development opportunities that could be supported by resident and travel markets, as well as make them aware of areas or markets where there may be too much development and competition.[67] These lists could be actively marketed by economic development and outreach personnel to facilitate opportunity development.
- Promote rental and shuttling opportunities in support of product development. Examples of equipment that could be covered include mountain bikes, motorboats, kayaks, canoes, fishing gear, snowmobiles, skiing equipment and possibly climbing equipment. Expansion of rental equipment would benefit both local residents who wish to try an activity on a limited basis and visitors to the area who are unable or do not wish to bring recreation equipment to the area.

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[67] A synopsis of retail threshold analysis with work samples and bibliographic references is available on the University of Wisconsin's Center for Community Economic Development web site: http://www.aae.wisc.edu/www/cced/961.pdf

- Prepare a listing of cultural experiences that could be added to a primary eco-tourism adventure. Such a listing might include performances by traditional and contemporary performing artists (e.g. dance troupes), story-telling by First Nations' elders or excursions to view historic sites or places of interest.
- Compile and maintain planning resource materials at economic development and band offices for use by local entrepreneurs. There are several tourism planning guides and handbooks that could have more circulation locally. A suggested distribution package for local entrepreneurs includes:
    - Executive summaries and maps of this report, and other recent TOS reports, including Kalum and Kispiox. Collectively, these reports provide the essential market information for outdoor adventure tourism development in the study area.
    - Business of Adventure: Developing a Business in Adventure Tourism is a good guide for developing a new adventure tourism business or purchasing an existing one. A sample business plan is included.[88]
    - The Adventure Tourism Series published by the Open Learning Agency is a workbook written especially for those who are entering the adventure tourism industry as guides or operators, or who are just about to do so. This series focuses on the core guiding skills and understandings common to all adventure tourism operations and is based upon the Outdoor Guide Occupational Standards.[89]
    - Aboriginal Tourism Business Planning Guide: checklist for success: how to develop, promote and run your own tourism operation. This document is a joint publication of the Aborginal Tourism Team Canada and the Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council. It can be obtained from the Canadian Tourism Commission offices in Ottawa.[90] There are numerous other planning guides for individual businesses on this site.
    - A step-by-step guide for dealing with the regulatory process, and particularly land use issues, in tourism development was recently prepared by Tourism BC.[91] It would be helpful in navigating through various licensing and permitting processes for those activities occurring off reserve lands.
    - Information on commercial recreation tenures from BC Assets and Land Corporation should be distributed in case a proposed operation wishes to make use of Crown land. It is not necessary to distribute the entire policy document but "frequently asked question" information can be obtained from BCAL and distributed.[92]
    - A Road Map to Tourism Financing from the Canadian Tourism Commission outlines the major funding options for new and existing tourism businesses.[93] Although it may be too detailed to hand out to individuals, it could be kept at a central site and an executive summary distributed as part of the package. Other financial information can be obtained

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[88] Published by Bhudak Consultants – ISBN: 0-0682474-0-0.

[89] http://www.ola.bc.ca/

[90] http://www.canadatourism.com/en/ctc/tourismresources/referenceCentre/references_ms.cfm

[91] http://www.cthrc.ca/english/certif/index.html

[92] http://www.bc-land-assets.com/for_business/commercial_recreation/index.htm

[93] http://www.canadatourism.com/en/ctc/tourismresources/publications/publications_ms.cfm

from the inventory of government assistance programs maintained by the Canada-BC Service Centre.[94]

- Support business development of local tourism sector opportunities by establishing a group of business mentors and local financial experts to advise on the issues and requirements of securing financing. Securing financing for entrepreneurs who wish to operate tourism businesses will be challenging. Many traditional lending institutions do not like to lend to ventures located in remote areas of British Columbia. The local mentors and financial experts could consider the merits of establishing a local Community Venture Capital Corporation which could further increase the access to capital for tourism-related businesses. Assistance with the development of a network of venture capital avenues and alternative financing opportunities for tourism businesses could also be explored.

8.3.7 Marketing

As the outdoor adventure market grows and matures, it will become less homogeneous and more specialized, forming niches with distinct travel characteristics. As this occurs, community and small business operators will be forced to streamline and specialize their marketing approach, making it easier for visitors to obtain the value-for-money experience they seek. A visitor's tourism experience while in the region is essentially determined by the product or activity being delivered by the operator. A quality product is synonymous with a positive visitor experience. There are measures a community can take to influence product and market development by working with stakeholder groups, government agencies and tourism operators.

8.3.7.1 KEY ACTIONS:

- Establish a clear market vision and position for the community, particularly Smithers. A clear statement of their position within the competitive tourism market place can guide marketing and other development programs. Marketing resources tend to be scarce so conventional community advertising should be closely examined to determine what is working and missing, and how marketing could be improved. It is important that the community fully understand what it has to offer, how it stacks up against other communities, what the targeted customer is really looking for, and how to reach and meet those needs.

- Some survey respondents suggested more cooperative marketing could be undertaken in the Bulkley region. A cooperative marketing group, utilizing programs from the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) might be feasible. Several CTC programs (e.g. Regional Tourism Marketing Initiative and the Adventure Program) could be utilized locally, providing a consortium of interested stakeholders was formed.

- Encourage targeted product development in the region. Some products such as river rafting may be nearing their commercial and capacity limitations in the region. Communities can work with government agencies and operators to direct new investment into products and areas with more growth potential. Also, innovation and change are bywords of tourism product development. Rather than simply reproducing products that can be purchased elsewhere, the emphasis should be on developing unique combinations of activities and experiences that define the region's market presence. A logical pairing in the region is the outdoor adventure and First Nations cultural experience. Another opportunity may be with Ski Smithers and complementary outdoor products in both winter and summer.

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[94] Catalogues are available from the Canada-BC Service Centre.

- Provide packaging assistance to smaller operators who might not normally have the capacity to engage in sophisticated distribution practices, for example through tour wholesalers and travel agents. Through packaging, operators can create innovative products by pooling their ideas and resources, while visitors have a simplified purchase decision and the chance to experience a unique holiday. The challenge for the community is to create a cooperative environment in which operators see a payoff for participating. The more who participate, the better the opportunities for package development. Areas of need include:
    - Operator training in package design, perhaps through a local workshop.
    - A pilot project involving several operators for a package promotion into a nearby market such as Prince George.
    - An inbound tour operator capable of multi-activity packaging and marketing.

8.3.8 Training and Education

Workforce development is critical for the advancement of tourism and particularly challenging for First Nations communities in the study area because of the historical lack of access to training opportunities and resources. For the most part, the human infrastructure needed to support initiatives is limited in terms of the understanding and skills needed to participate competitively in many of these forms of tourism development. This situation exists for tourism training and delivery in many developing regions, but is more pronounced in First Nations' communities. The level of tourism awareness has to be taken into account when designing training programs. The process of getting tourism training can be long and complex and frustrate communities. However, the fact that there are more programs and resources than even before should compel communities to get together with training partners and make sure tourism operators and workers are given access to training that will make the local industry competitive.

8.3.8.1 KEY ACTIONS:

- Distribute information on certification programs for adventure tourism. There is no single set of national or provincial standards of certification either for tourism or outdoor adventure tourism positions. The following are suggested starting points for local certification of operators and guides:
    - The Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) administers certification of the National Occupational Standards for the tourism industry and they work with provincial agencies for delivery of programs and services. At the time of writing of this report, the designated agency in BC, the Pacific Rim Institute of Tourism, had closed its doors. Their educational and training programs are now being handled by the Hospitality Industry Education Advisory Committee.95 These standards are rooted in the hospitality

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[95] (604) 930-9770

sector and are broadly based. Relevant profiles for local certification include Freshwater Angling Guide, Heritage Interpreter, Local Tour Guide and Outdoor Adventure Guide. Other training resources are available from the CTHRC website.[96]

- A comprehensive listing of certification options through industry associations in Canada is now being compiled by the Canadian Tourism Commission. The industry profile and resource guide will soon be available on the CTC website.[97]
- Formal education programs and degrees in outdoor recreation are available through the Open Learning Agency and the college system in the province. Each college has its own outdoor adventure program and in many cases curriculum. There is now an initiative to establish provincial program standards and streamline delivery so graduates conform to industry-accepted training guidelines.[98] Northwest Community College provides a Wilderness Guiding Skills Program.

- Recruit leaders and key partners such as HRDC and prepare a concept brief which outlines a program for promoting tourism career opportunities. The stereotype of the low-paid tourism job is not entirely accurate. There are a range of occupations that require a variety of skills and training, and earnings reflect these differences. Industries with an important tourism component where weekly wages are above the sector average include air transport, museums and archives, auto and truck rental and travel services. Even the entry-level jobs in tourism which are low-paying provide an opportunity for new workforce entrants to gain experience and ascend to better positions at higher pay. The seasonal and part-time positions available in tourism can be a valuable source of employment for those members of the workforce who may not want full-time work, for example because of family obligations or because the tourism season fits the traditional cultural seasonal lifestyle.

- Gather and distribute training materials and resources for local entrepreneurs and workers interested in pursuing a tourism career. Resources include:
  - Canadian Tourism Human Resources Council[99] offers workbooks, trainer's guides, train-the-trainer resources and videos addressing the skills necessary for professional development. National training resources exist for eight tourism sectors, including adventure tourism.
  - For First Nations members, the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT)[100] and other education centres provide a unique venue for resource and information dissemination. Also, Aboriginal Business Canada[101] is involved in a variety of business and management assistance programs for aboriginal clients, including skill development. They can also act as a conduit to Industry Canada's information products. Business planning guides, entrepreneurship training software, and a host of aboriginal business development reference material is available by request, or on the Internet.

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[96] http://www.cthrc.ca/english/

[97] For more information contact Frank Verschuren at verschuren.frank@ic.gc.ca

[98] For more information call Terry Hood at (604) 329-6476 or thood@telus.net

[99] http://www.cthrc.ca/english/index.html

[100] http://www.nvit.bc.ca/

[101] http://www.strategis.ic.gc.ca/SSG/ab00002e.html

  - Aboriginal Youth Business Council[102] is a volunteer run, non-profit, youth-driven council of First Nation, Metis, & Inuit entrepreneurs. Their Internet site was created as a resource for youth to learn about business.

- Examine delivery of viable entrepreneurship and skill development programs to encourage more First Nations outdoor adventure businesses. Suggestions include:

  - Identify ways to increase partnerships between operators and students (e.g. guide mentoring program).
  - CESO Aboriginal Services[103] is a volunteer organization which promotes and extends the economic and social growth and well-being of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. They are extensively involved in skills transfer programs and have a tourism and hospitality program shaped around a series of workshops that can be delivered locally.
  - The Native Tourism Development Program offered by the Native Education Centre in Vancouver is a first year college training program uniquely designed for aboriginal people interested in pursuing a career in the tourism industry.
  - Open Learning Agency[104] can adapt some of its modules for First Nations delivery. There are eight modules in the tourism program, including Adventure Tourism, for individuals working in or considering entering the adventure tourism industry in BC. The material is based upon national occupational standards for Outdoor Guides and was developed by BC and New Zealand adventure tourism leaders in collaboration with industry associations.
  - Community Futures delivers the Western Youth Entrepreneur Program[105]. The program, sponsored by Western Economic Diversification, is meant to boost entrepreneurial opportunities for BC youth. Each Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC), including Nadina Community Futures, initially received $200,000 in funding to support a loan program for persons between the ages of 18 and 29. Loans of up to $25,000 are provided at competitive interest rates. Wet'suwet'en and Nat'oot'en can assist their young people in accessing the capital, business planning, training and technical assistance for supporting new tourism ventures.

8.3.9 Infrastructure

The design and placement of infrastructure is a powerful community tool for controlling and directing tourism development. Tourism is a small business-oriented industry and requires extensive investments in infrastructure – this applies even to wilderness operators who might be relatively self-sufficient but still require key transportation and supply networks to support their tourism products. The community can influence backcountry use directly through public infrastructure placement and indirectly by encouraging and shaping private infrastructure (e.g. hospitality services).

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[102] http://www.aybc.org/

[103] http://www.ceso-saco.com/aboriginalsvc.htm

[104] http://www.ola.bc.ca/cgi-bin/htsearch

[105] http://www.wd.gc.ca/eng/finance/programs/youth.html

8.3.9.1 KEY ACTIONS:

- Raise the awareness of the importance of the local road infrastructure in the region for tourism purposes. Work with local, provincial, and federal governments to identify and implement priority highway maintenance and upgrading.

- Work with transportation providers and the Council of Tourism Associations of British Columbia to ensure that public air and bus linkages are complimentary and supportive of the region's tourism industry. Investigate key issues such as service, prices and schedules.

- Investigate the further development of rail passenger service to the region. Rail travel by tourists has been enjoying good growth in BC in recent years and with the reduction in coal and forest product shipments in northern BC and the talk of developing an Alaskan rail line, railways may be interest in exploring new viable business opportunities in the region.

- One or more communities should undertake a community recreation plan dedicated to trail system development, with particular attention to identifying and developing an integrated multi-use trail system for land-based and winter-based products. This might include dedicated mountain biking trails in close proximity to Smithers and/or Telkwa as a first step. The Ministry of Forests could be lobbied to increase its recreation budget for trail maintenance. While this would only address MoF's trail inventory, there would at least be some effort to maintain a marketable product. Research should be conducted into implementing a user-pay system for furnishing the resources needed for ongoing trail maintenance, as the BC Snowmobile Association does with its members. The Ministry of Forests has implemented a camping fee system on all camping sites since 1999 and there has been enhanced site designation on high use areas (although there are none in the Bulkley Forest District) where incremental fees are charged. Such programs may spread to other public facilities and there will be opportunities, as there is today, for community involvement in the planning and management of these sites.

9 Annex A — Data Collection Results

9.1 Survey Results

A total of 93 operators were identified as having head offices or operations that take place in the Bulkley Plan Area. All operators were sent a mail or fax survey. Twenty nine percent (27) of the total number of tourism operators in the study area responded to the surveys or telephone interviews. Information regarding operators who did not participate in the survey was extracted from secondary sources. The distribution of responses were as follows:

Response Category	Number	Percent
Survey population	93	100%
Telephone interview completed	11	
Returned completed survey	16	
Total response and response rate	**27**	**30%**

9.2 Respondent Profile

The following set of tables show the distribution of tourism operators in the study area by various categories of operation. A number of operators offer two or more types of tourism activities and in some cases several distinct types of tourism operations. The primary activities are noted on a separate column. Each of the secondary activities is given an equal weight, resulting in totals greater than the total number of operators in the study area.

Accommodations			
Code	**Description**	**Primary /** Secondary	
A01	Hotel	**2**	0
A02	Motel	**8**	0
A03	RV/Campground	**9**	2
A04	Lodge/Resort	**13**	0
A05	Camps	**11**	8
A06	Huts/ Cabins	**2**	4
A07	Cabins/Cottages	**1**	3
A08	Guest Ranches	**1**	0
A09	Bed and Breakfast	**8**	0
A11	Hostel	**0**	0
	Total	55	17

Attractions			
Code	**Description**	**Primary /** Secondary	
T01	Museum	**2**	0
T02	Arts/Culture/Heritage	**10**	0
T03	Recreation	**28**	9
T07	Nature	**0**	35
T08	Sports	**0**	0
T09	Golf - public	**2**	0
T11	Golf - semi-private	**0**	0
T12	Marina - public	**0**	0
T14	Ski Facility	**1**	0
T16	Rental	**2**	0
	Total	**45**	44

Guides/Tour Operators			
Code	**Description**	**Primary /** Secondary	
R01	Guide-outfitter	**8**	1
R02	River rafting	**12**	1
R04	Marine Charters, Fresh	**14**	4
R05	Air tours/charters	**4**	0
R07	Kayak/Canoe	**5**	9
R08	Bus Charters / Tours	**1**	2
R11	Hiking/Mountaineering	**3**	14
R14	Snowmobile	**0**	0
R15	Cycling	**1**	1
R16	Rockclimbing	**0**	1
R17	Horse and Trail	**3**	4
R18	Ski Touring	**2**	5
R19	Other	**0**	0
	Total	53	42

Transportation (Scheduled)			
Code	**Description**	**Primary /** Secondary	
P05	Air	**1**	0
P08	Bus	**0**	0
P09	Rail	**1**	0
P19	Taxi	**0**	0
P20	Car Rental	**0**	0
	Total	**2**	0

9.3 Study Contacts

Study Contacts

Name	Organization
Ray Carrier	BC Assets and Lands
Ron Fowler	Nine Mile Snowmobile Club
Christoph Deitzfelbinger	Bear Enterprises Ltd.
Derrick Mohr	Driftwood Valley Outfitters
Wendel Imhof	Alpine Lakes Air
Roger Mccolm	Northern Sun Tours
Peter Krause	MC Bicycle Shop
Cary McClean	Skeena Eco Expeditions

9.4 Survey Respondents

Survey Respondents
Company/Organization
Alpine Lakes Air
Backcountry Wildlife And Hiking Tours
Bulkley Valley Motel
Canaan Country B & B
Chez Josette B & B
Cotswold B & B
Double D-Lux Trail Riding
Driftwood Valley Outfitters
Eckards Fish Guiding
Florence Motel
Frontier Farwest Fishing Lodge
Glacier View RV Park
Granny Goes Rafting
HA Butler Contracting
Hess, Evan B
Lakes District Air Services
Mc Bicycle Shop
Morice Lake Guiding
Northern Lights Wilderness Tours
Northern Sun Tours Ltd.
P & G Guide Service
Rivers West Adventures
Rocky Ridge Chalets
Soul Pupose Adventures
Take-A-Hike Tours & Howsons Hut
Trails End RV Campground

9.4.1 Survey Highlights

To follow below is a summary of the comments and suggestions for three key open-ended questions asked during the survey process:

Question 7 – What are some of the key issues affecting tourism development in the Kispiox &/or Bulkley Forest Districts?

- The negativity found in being able to work with MELP and the Ministry of Fisheries.
- Lack of hydro and telephone access to our area of operation – very expensive to install.
- Land use, lake roads of crown land.
- Recreational use, summer and winter.
- Need good community attitude towards tourism.
- BC Tourism marketing Vancouver/Victoria/Whistler – no help from government for marketing.
- I am not allowed a highway sign for my B & B because I am 3 km from main highway.
- Poor comments and attitude towards tourism
- Lack of opportunities with train – many of my guests can't get on the train.
- Advertising & Marketing

- Need more activities, preferably guided.
- Need help (financial) for people stating a business.
- Need recreational land developed and marketed
- Need accessible trails
- Uncertainty of Air Canada supplying sufficient service to Smithers
- Others are encroaching into pristine wilderness areas and BECAL issuing tenures overlapping other existing tenures. To provide pristine wilderness there has to be a limited number of operators in any given area.
- Lack of dependable service to the area – ie air service.
- We all need to be successful. The job to attract guests here needs to be a community decision. If we all pool our resources we could become a tourism destination.
- Mostly tourists are passing through. We need to attract tourists to this area as a destination.
- Further access via roads (more roads) in the area I use would greatly reduce the viability and reason we promote the area.
- Opportunities in recreation are endless but must be managed now before it becomes an issue.
- Chamber of Commerce does not take tourism seriously – skilled labour is available locally, so is training capacity.
- Total lack of real open and honest round table planning.
- Uncontrolled logging roads into the headwaters without sufficient planning or comprehensive thought beforehand.
- Tourism is trivialized by most commonly held thinking styles here in BC.
- There is a huge need for discussion and education aimed at building new relationships.
- Government bureaucracy is biggest problem – too many regulations and very, very slow in processing applications.
- Weather to a lesser degree – summer season is too short.
- Lack of communication between communities, especially for marketing.
- Availability of capital is always a problem.
- Hospitality is generally poor in this region.
- Accessibility
- Seasonality or weather
- Road Developments
- Need for qualified rafting guides – current demand exceeds carrying capacity.
- Key strength of region – "off the beaten path" and great wilderness areas.
- Strength – mountains and glaciers
- Lack of reasonable air fares to Smithers
- No RV rentals
- Poor management of guiding by Ministry of Environment.
- Carrying capacity (Air)
- Resource Land Use Management or Policy
- Community attitude to tourism
- Small guide businesses need access to the unused rod days that the government has unassigned or taken back.
- There must be more fishing guide licences issued to more people on classified water.
- Government implements their own agenda without using local feedback.
- Large tour operators cornering markets (QCI – if all guests at major lodges caught their limit, there would be no quota left for small operators in Masset and QCC).
- Depressed local economy

- Availability of capital
- No proximity to other attractions

Question 8 – What do you feel are the best new potential tourism development opportunities in the ecotourism/adventure travel sector in the Kispiox &/or Bulkley Forest Districts?

- To build around the successful operations to take advantage on a value added basis for clients from around the world. Currently, there is not much available outside of the activity folks come for – fishing, hunting, etc.
- More winter promotion of area – ie snowmobiling
- More tourism information to be sent out by our area tourism to USA – ie Alaska and northern states near Canadian border.
- Make stopping in Kispiox/Bulkley more desirable and promote local tourism to all ferry traffic as next stop heading east on Hwy 16 – 5 hours.
- Back country skiing – non-motorized
- Campgrounds in forested areas.
- Campgrounds for large rigs.
- Laundromats and showers for campers.
- More day trips, ie hiking, camping, boating, wildlife viewing. The longer trips 10 to 14 days are covered by guides.
- New tourism coordinator with the Chamber of Commerce, Gladys Atrill. She has motivation and hopefully she will have the financial resources to continue the work she is doing.
- Howsun Hut & Tyhee Mtn winter trails – we could take the opportunity to promote our wilderness.
- Soft tourism – ie adventure related but not strenuous.
- Hiking
- There isn't much left to be saved, especially after seeing the last logging plans north of the Babine River and in the Upper Skeena and Sicintine River Region.
- The profession of modern guiding needs to be nurtured more than sites identified or experiences marketed.
- Wilderness areas are way more valuable than graded, logged lands.
- Guides need to have interesting character and an entreprenurial heart.
- Modern tourism has to do with relationships.
- Wilderness camping
- Wildlife viewing
- Hiking
- Fishing
- Winter tourism
- Guiding
- Sightseeing
- River Rafting
- Boating
- Hiking
- Fishing
- Promoting land use for tourism
- Keeping roads in good shape
- Provide tours with an education component – ie field based activities that combine leisure and learning: language learning, first nations history, field based ecology.
- Heli Skiing at Bell II.

- Fish Guiding – all non-canadians must hire guide.
- Expansion of ski area (Smithers)
- Fishing
- Better fisheries management and development
- More angling guides for the ever increasing amount of tourists
- Wildlife viewing
- First nations involvement with tourists
- Eco-hiking
- Ecotours
- Promotion of native sites and arts

Question 9 – What do you believe should be done to encourage further development in the ecotourism and adventure travel segment of tourism? Are there specific actions you would like to see undertaken in your district(s)?

- A very good working relationship with respective ministries and departments would go a long way. Currently MELP & Ministry of Fisheries are not prepared to work with stakeholders in an open partnership. Government needs to work in cooperation rather than be a dictator. Believe it or not, business knows how to operate – big brother needs not to be so controlling.
- Better advertising to all potential tourists as to what we can offer in our area.
- Information signs at highway stops are great in town, however a sign of local interests would be great if offered at other locations and towns – ie Prince Rupert for Ferry traffic.
- Have VIA Rail add one more car for tourists with user friendly schedules and taking bikes
- Marketing
- B & B Association with common website
- More money for advertising in Europe and USA
- More active local tourism group
- Support for tourism association (Hazelton)
- Conduct open, honest, real life meetings between MELP and Tourism and Guides.
- Nurture and strengthen good relationships with all guides.
- Allow for diversity.
- Creat a climate where tourism is valued – not trivialized.
- Outfitters, hunting and fishing, bring more to the community then anyone but are the least recognized by tourism.
- Better air line service. Something has to be done. It's a fiasco.
- Grants
- Tax Breaks
- Develop a hiking trail similar to the West Coast Trail with an alpine theme. Maybe across Hudson Bay Mtn to McDonnell Lake up the Serb Creek Trail ending near Terrace – maybe 6 day hike. Much of trail is already in place.
- More knowledgeable tourist information put out as well as staff that know the area and what it can offer.
- In reality all we have left is the parks and upper Skeena, Sicintine and Shelagyote for another five years or so.
- Since 1985 we have lost 31 fly-in camping destinations within a 100 mile radius of Smithers. There are only 14 pristine wilderness fly-in destinations left. – See FAX.
- Get government to stop over regulatiing the industry.

- Marketing our area as a package and a destination rather than a stop on the way to somewhere else.
- Want one law for all BC people – give natives the same hunting and fishing rights as non-natives.
- Close rivers for fishing that have weak returns of fish.
- More fish hatcheries and spawning areas.
- Better management of our resources.
- Cut the number of civil servanats in BC as most appear to be unproductive.
- Promotion
- Expand current cooperative initiatives among local tour operators
- Need high quality publication/brochure/bookley with photos and info on area in variety of languages.
- Do not make licensing of rights too expensive.
- Educate government about value of tourism over other land use decisions.
- Less restrictive policy regarding access to rivers
- Better camping facilities and boat launch access.
- Take control of the wilderness resource. Stop letting everyone from around the world come here and do whatever they want in our wilderness – we can't do it in their country.
- Government involvement will mean users will pay for the use of the resource. They will off load resource management to the few that have direct involvement.

9.4.2 Tourism Survey Instrument

On the following three pages, the reader will find a sample of the tourism stakeholder survey instrument.

British Columbia

Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture

Tourism Policy and Land Use Branch

Tourism Opportunities Study

Stakeholder Survey

The Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture (MSBTC) have selected the Bulkley & Kispiox Forest Districts for completion of two Tourism Opportunity Strategies (TOS). We are seeking your input as a local tourism operator in the completion of the TOS for these study areas (please see attached study area map).

A TOS is a study sponsored by the MSBTC – with partner agencies - to (i) update inventory information on current tourism/ecotourism operators in the study area and their key geographical areas of interest/use, and (ii) to examine a region's potential for further development in the ecotourism sector. The study is undertaken at a regional level, usually a forest district, to coincide with other land use planning processes and resource management agency boundaries. The information derived from a TOS is shared with several groups. Crown land managers are provided the updated inventory information so that they can include tourism interests in their own land management and development planning processes. Local economic and tourism development agencies use TOS information to assist with tourism marketing and economic development efforts. Finally, MSBTC will use the TOS results to support planning decisions by all agencies affecting the tourism industry. On completion of the TOS, the final report and data will be made immediately available through posting the final documents and maps as .pdf files on a MSBTC internet (ftp) site. This will ensure that all tourism stakeholders will have full access to the final reports in a very timely manner.

This survey is a critical component of the TOS and is undertaken on behalf of the Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture (MSBTC) by a consulting team led by Meredith & Associates (Greg Meredith). The survey is comprised of two parts : Part I (questions 1 – 5) assists in updating tourism operator and resource inventory information; Part II (questions 6 – 9) seeks your input and opinions on key issues affecting ecotourism development in your region.

Please answer only those questions that apply to your business.

Organization/Company Name:______________________________

Contact:______________________ **Title:**_____________________

Mailing Address:____

Physical Address (if different from above):______________________

City, Prov:__________________ **Postal Code:**____________________

Phone:______________________________ **Fax:**_________________

E-Mail:______________________________

Web Site:_____________________________

Part I :

1. If your company is a:
- Accommodation facility/property manager ☐, proceed to # 2.
- Tour operator (guide, adventure, etc) ☐ proceed to #3.

2. **If you are based in or use the district(s)** and offer **overnight** accommodation facilities, please indicate for each type of facility you operate, the following information.

Type of Facility	Accommodation units (rooms)	Campground Sites
Hotel / Motel		
Condominium		
Cabins	(# beds or cabins)	
Lodge / Resort		
Fishing / Guide Camp	(# beds or tents)	
Bed &Breakfast		
Vessel Lodge / Float house	(# beds or rooms)	
	# RV sites	**# Campsites**
RV Park / Campground	with hook-ups	
	no hook-ups	
	Moorage feet	**# Boats**
Moorage space		
	Number of Berths	
Charter Boat(s)		

2a. Which study area(s) {see map} do you utilize?

Bulkley FD ☐ **Kispiox FD** ☐ **Both** ☐

3. What are the **primary activities** provided by your operation in the district (Examples include: hiking, rafting, fishing).

▸ ______

▸ ______

▸ ______

▸ ______

4. What are the **secondary activities** provided by your operation (A secondary activity would not be supplied without the presence of the primary activity. A secondary activity does not have to be guided, e.g. wildlife watching, camping).

▸ ______

▸ ______

▸ ______

▸ ______

5. Please indicate the location of the **key geographical areas**; **resources** (i.e. trails); **and/or natural features** (i.e. waterfalls); that you frequently utilize in your operations. (Note: This information will be shared with crown land managers so that they are aware of individual tourism operators' geographical areas of interest for agency consultation and referral purposes.)

______

______

______

______

→ Please mark and label items on the attached map.

Would you like the above information (responses to Questions 1 – 5) to be provided to your regional tourism association for marketing and tourist referral purposes?
YES ____ ***NO*** _____

Part II :

6. Please indicate the number of people that you employed in 2000 for the operations in the district for the following categories:

_________ Full time year round
_________ Full time seasonal
_________ Part time year round
_________ Part time seasonal
_________ Total employees (persons)

Do you employ local residents? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, how many of the above employees would be local residents _________?

7. What are some of the key issues affecting tourism development in the Kispiox &/or Bulkley Forest Districts? You may wish to consider some of the outstanding strengths of the region, or perhaps factors, which are impeding or threatening further development. Table 1 provides some suggestions to assist with your response:

Table 1: Possible Issues and Opportunities for Tourism/Recreation Development

Natural features (e.g., mountains, lakes)	Resource/land use management or policy	Community attitude to tourism
Recreation features	Local availability of required supplies & services	Market and demand conditions
Seasonality or weather	Hospitality/amenities in nearby community(s)	Competition
Cultural or historical features	Accessibility from nearest community	Availability of capital
Current degree of development or utilization	Proximity to other attractions	Local/regional skills/labour market
Carrying capacity	Local economic development initiatives or office	Local/regional training capacity

→

8. What do you feel are the best new potential tourism development opportunities in the ecotourism/adventure travel sector in the Kispiox and/or Bulkley Forest Districts?

→

9. What do you believe should be done to encourage further development in the ecotourism and adventure travel segment of tourism? Are there specific actions you would like to see undertaken in your district(s)?

Further comments (please use additional paper if required):

On behalf of all local tourism stakeholders, thank you very much for your participation & assistance ☺!

Should you have any questions regarding this survey or the Tourism Opportunity Study(s) in general please contact :

Greg Meredith Meredith & Associates Smithers 847-3196 silvertip@uniserve.com	Dave Harris Hillcrest Recreation Consulting Telkwa 846-9246 harrisdk@bulkley.net	Sarah Doe MSBTC — Tourism Policy & Land Use Branch Victoria, BC 387-6487

10 Annex B — Product Pre-Feasibility Profiles

There are 8 product profiles covered in this appendix. The purpose of the profiles is to give readers some understanding of the issues surrounding business development. The main report dealt with the two key issues of land/resource capability and community capacity for tourism development. This section takes a business focus by assessing other inputs an operator requires in order to create a competitive and successful commercial recreation venture. The products are:

- Canoeing/kayaking
- Hiking
- Snowmobiling
- Ski touring
- Cross-country skiing
- Road touring
- Lodge/resort
- Huts

Each profile consists of an assessment of market, locational, infrastructure, financial and business development issues. Key success factors and complementary activities are also discussed. Readers are reminded that the following profiles are general in nature. Further assessment and planning is required to determine the actual feasibility of product development in the Bulkley Plan Area.

10.1 Canoeing/Kayaking

Product Description	***Canoe/kayak tour company.***			
Markets	Participants/soft adventurers from BC, short-haul markets (Canada and US) and overseas markets (Germany). Enthusiasts/hard adventurers (BC and Alberta residents).			
Competition	▸ There is extensive competition regionally and across Canada for canoeing and kayaking. Canadian Rockies, Kootenays, Thompson Okanagan and the Cariboo offer quality river/lake experiences, with similar or better features.			
Overall Potential	▸ Long-term trends show rising participation rates among North American markets, particularly among soft adventure participants rather than the extreme enthusiast market. ▸ All of these markets are seeking a broader outdoor adventure experience and may decide to participate in recreational paddling once in the region. The Bulkley FD can offer a range of close-in/remote adventures and is very well positioned to attract more visitors.			
Location Needs	▸ For river activities, access to single and multi-day canoe/kayak routes, flat water routes and fast water routes, varying grades of water for all levels of expertise, play areas and water suitable for instruction are all important considerations. ▸ For lakes, larger lakes with variable shorelines, and attractive scenery with little sign of human presence are the primary attractants for this activity. Generally, lakes that permit half-day to full day paddling and enable participants to achieve a sense of isolation (including being away from other participants) are preferred. Smaller lakes can also have potential, but would require the presence of additional features to enhance the experience. Such features include historical or cultural sites, wildlife viewing, sandy beaches, waterfalls, fishing, etc. ▸ Less modified landscapes are preferred to highly modified landscapes.			
Issues	▸ Licences & permits ▸ Weather conditions	▸ Fluctuating water levels on reservoirs	▸ Environmental, wildlife and fishing guidelines	▸ Good road access & egress points
Infrastructure	▸ Access for put- in and take-out ▸ Campsites ▸ Transportation access from staging area ▸ Shuttling services ▸ Accommodation and food service support ▸ Trained guides & instructors ▸			

10.1 Canoeing/Kayaking

Financial	Low capital costs - Typically, to operate within established industry standards, maximum tour group size is ten guests with two guides, and using a mixed fleet of double and single kayaks or canoes. A fleet of 5 double and two single fiberglass kayaks, with all necessary kayaking equipment (paddles, PFDs, spray decks, pumps, and required safety equipment) would cost an operator between $25-30,000. Many companies also provide tents, sleeping pads, dry bags, paddling jackets or wetsuits, and all camp kitchen facilities (shelter, portable stove, pots, etc.). Start-up equipment needs and costs will vary depending on partnerships with other tourism product operators, and on the style and remoteness of the trips. ▸ Operators offering kayaking tours had annual revenues of approximately $120,000 in 1993, with approximately one third bringing in less than $50,000. The kayak business is very profitable because of lower-than-average operating expenses. The average outfit has 700 clients with an average daily revenue of $113 per traveller. The average trip length was 5.7 days. ▸
Business Development	▸ Instruction services are essential for a guiding outfit so having instructors with the ability to clearly explain, demonstrate and provide feedback and coaching is a benefit. This usually means instructors/guides who have proven certification and demonstrate an ability to teach. ▸ Nature observation, wildlife viewing and fishing are also attractants for these markets. The German market, especially, is interested in wildlife viewing. Whether canoeing or kayaking, product development has to incorporate some outstanding recreational feature, aesthetic appeal or valued secondary activity. Multi-activity packaging and interpretation is essential. ▸ More vertical integration of product design and marketing is required, including raising awareness of the potential of lakes and rivers among BC residents (i.e. enthusiasts who are activity-oriented travellers). ▸ Resource management has a significant impact on the marketability of canoeing and kayaking. The extensive evidence of industrial forestry has compromised the potential of some river sections. Visual quality is a very important attribute for this pursuit. Hydroelectric activity is a major consideration for river and lake product – water levels will influence how and where development can take place. The most reliable flow rates/levels for river activities are associated with fall to spring precipitation (which are also colder months). ▸ If an operator uses a specific land feature such as a beach or camp on a regular basis then CBR tenure will be required. Typically, conflicts with other users are low, but jet boats can be a problem in high use areas. ▸ People are generally looking for shorter trips, on average for 7 days when travelling abroad. Yield management for tour operators will be increasingly important as a result of running more numerous, short-term trips.

10.1 Canoeing/Kayaking

Key Success Factors	Having modern, well-maintained equipment is important. This will require ongoing upgrading to newer equipment, which is especially important for river kayaking. A variety of water classes will give an operator some flexibility when catering to markets. Good whitewater is essential for enthusiasts, while lower classes are needed when serving lower-skilled, soft adventurers. ▸ If waterflow is controlled by dams, a coordinated plan to match water conditions with planned usage is important. This means investing time and effort in developing the itineraries and routes for trips. There should be pre-prepared options in the event of poor weather. ▸ Put-in and take-out sites should be easily accessible while coordinated support should be in place for take-outs. ▸ Interpreters and guides with a thorough knowledge of the area and ability to convey this in an interesting and informative way will appeal strongly to the soft adventure market which is interested in more than the canoeing or kayaking activity itself. This also applies to food and accommodation planning, making sure that clients have been matched with the anticipated service expectations.
Complementary Activities	▸ Natural and cultural features viewing. ▸ Heritage interpretation. ▸ Fishing. ▸ Camping. ▸ Hut systems.

10.2 Hiking

Product Description	***Guided Interpretive hikes and nature tours.***
Markets	All markets, especially the soft adventure visitors among short-haul (Canada and US), long-haul (Canada and US) and overseas markets (Germany). Hiking enthusiasts (interpretive tours into new areas). ▸ Park visitors, including tour travellers. ▸ Seniors for Elderhostels ▸ Nature lovers of all ages
Competition	▸ There is extensive competition regionally, nationally and internationally for travellers interested in pursuing hiking. The hiking enthusiast in pursuit of a challenging, wilderness trek product has a wide range of products and experiences to choose from. The national parks cater extensively to this market. Many communities and all parks have developed trail inventories and related services that create a safe and interesting product for the soft adventurer/participant.
Overall Potential	▸ The potential for development in the region is average. There are high quality resources and visitor markets that place a high value on hiking activity. However, a lack of well known trail systems will limit development. ▸ Demand will continue to increase for hiking both as a primary activity and as a secondary activity in conjunction with other products. Because of its accessibility, low skill requirements, relative safety and instant appeal, growth rates among North American and European hiking markets are expected to continue to climb even as the overall population ages. ▸ The potential for commercial hiking tours spans a full range of options from multi-day trekking tours to short interpreted tours of the frontcountry.
Location Needs	▸ Wilderness areas and parks. ▸ Trails and trail systems. ▸ High scenic and natural values. ▸ Wildlife and wildlife viewing opportunities. ▸ Natural habitats. ▸ Solitude.
Issues	▸ Applicable licences and permits. ▸ ▸ Wildlife issues – most clients want to see bears. ▸ ▸ Conflicts on trails with other users.
Infrastructure	▸ Well signed and maintained trails ▸ Roads for access ▸ Shuttle service ▸ Maps / information ▸ Certified hiking guides
Financial	▸ Low capital costs – hiking and backpacking does not require a significant investment in equipment but trail and accommodation infrastructure is very important. Since the provision of these components can rarely be justified based on revenues available from hiking, multi-activity tourism has to be accommodated. ▸ The average Canadian tour operator offering hiking as the major activity had annual gross revenues of $167,000 in 1993. Almost two thirds of operators brought in less than $50,000 and this contributed to a low average gross margin of 6.9%, considerably less than other activities. With an average number of travellers of 1,390, this equated to about $120 in revenue per traveller.

10.2 Hiking

Business Development	The average Canadian hiking tour operator employed five seasonal personnel in 1993, with the majority of operators have less than four staff. Trained interpreters/guides who are experts in the area and interact well with people are important. First aid training is also a factor for day-hikes as well as for overnight trips. Target future M-K park visitors, including tour travellers in promotional activities. ▸ Niche marketing (e.g. slide shows, local presentations, communication with community groups) should be used to increase regional awareness of newly developed hiking products. ▸ The operation should be flexible enough to offer day hikes as well as overnight trips. The latter will have to be pressed through tour wholesalers or retail tour operators. Day hikes can be directly marketed to regional visitors who have some flex time for a short excursion. ▸ Hiking tour routes have to be developed around highly scenic, natural and recreational, and/or heritage/cultural resources. The better the signage, parking, garbage disposal, washrooms, and interpretative facilities the better the trip experience will be for users. Quality map information and investment in facilities is also important. ▸ In order for a guiding operation to succeed, it must provide a value-added service that hikers cannot obtain through self-guided hikes. This means creating a high-end experience through linkages to cultural/heritage interpretation, wildlife viewing, meals and lodging. ▸ Develop specialized tours or specialize completely in a specific market segment such as women only, seniors or at-risk youth. Although hiking appeals to a wide range of people demographically, it is important to identify specific target markets and their distinct needs.
Key Success Factors	▸ For soft adventure travellers, well-developed, relatively easy trails, in an uncrowded and pristine environment are preferred. ▸ Interesting features for nature and/or culture for day trips. ▸ Overnight trips need access to good camping or hut locations. Soft adventure travellers will prefer lodges/cabins while the enthusiast will prefer tenting. ▸ Offering activities which add an educational or recreational component such as nature interpretation and wildlife viewing and photography. This may include teaching participants how to minimize impact when hiking and camping in wilderness areas. ▸ Developing good routes for trips including contingency routes in case of poor weather conditions or other parties. ▸ Understanding, then exceeding, expectations of participants for meals. An operator should always enquire about dietary restrictions and preferences of participants before the trip and develop a meal plan accordingly. ▸ For soft adventure, inbound logistics are important – providing the right transportation from a primary site, to the staging area and beyond is critical. This will require detailed planning to ensure that the appropriate vehicles are available and supplies packed.
Complementary Activities	▸ Accommodations ▸ Visitor Centre ▸ Locally focused booking / central registry agency

10.3 Snowmobiling

Product Description	▸ Snowmobile terrain complex (location for related special events).
Markets	In BC, the regional and Canadian short-haul visitors comprise the majority of the snowmobile market. The best potential is within the regional market with a 500 mile radius, primarily Alberta. Participation by US and international visitors is minor. ▸ Soft-adventurers who are participating in other winter destination activities such as downhill and cross-country skiing are prime targets.
Competition	▸ Broad choice of destinations are available across the province. ▸ Province-wide trail network will improve access to quality terrain in affected communities, but it will also increase participation. ▸ For commercial operators, converting self-guided visitors to buyers of a commercial product will be a major challenge.
Overall Potential	▸ There is good resource attributes and snow conditions for snowmobiling throughout western portions of the District. The activity is growing extremely fast, perhaps more so than any other outdoor activity, motorized or non-motorized. The increased demand and use is coming from residents, regional visitors and short-haul visitors. The major limiting factors include distance from major regional markets and the lack of service infrastructure.
Location Needs	▸ A site should be 5 – 10 minutes from a town or service centre to take advantage of infrastructure, services such as fuel and mechanical, and hospitality (food, beverage, accommodation). ▸ Site must have a variety of terrain (ups, downs, flats).
Issues	▸ Business licence ▸ Wildlife ▸ Noise ▸ Pollution ▸ ▸ Zoning ▸ Liability insurance ▸ Access ▸ Conflicting use
Infrastructure	▸ On site needs include concession, washroom facilities, storage, parking, signage etc. ▸ A facility could be based on a commercial business, but for less developed areas it may be more practical to have the local snowmobile club manage the operation. A certain amount of sweat equity and volunteer time would be required to offset capital costs anyway.
Financial	▸ Moderate capital costs – a basic facility comprising trail building and minor service development would incur cash costs of at least $25,000 to $35,000 plus contributed equity in the form of volunteer labour.
Business Development	▸ The cooperation of local snowmobilers is essential as it will be difficult to justify the investment in facilities on a strictly commercial basis. Any development in a major community would automatically attract local users and may conflict with other possible uses (e.g. cross-country skiing). ▸ A new facility could be based on an all-season product (e.g. ATVs, motor cross in the summer). Developing trails in co-operation with off-season users such as hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders would also facilitate development.

10.3 Snowmobiling

Key Success Factors	• Access to high quality resources. • Ensuring trails and play areas are well-maintained by working with local snowmobile clubs and associations. • Improving infrastructure and hospitality services to encourage longer and more frequent trips. • Working with government and tourism agencies as well as environmental groups to develop and promote the trail systems, avoid user conflicts and manage visitation to avoid carrying capacity constraints. • Developing a code of conduct for safety and environmental concerns which is strictly adhered to.
Complementary Activities	• Special events. • Repair and maintenance services. • Sales and rentals.

10.4 Ski Touring

Product Description	▸ Guiding ski touring services.
Markets	Experienced/hard adventurers from all markets, with the best potential among short-haul US and Canadian markets. Participation rates are low but market demand is annually increasing. ▸ Good potential among soft adventurers (destination-oriented decision-makers) who may be introduced to ski touring given up-to-date ski technology, safe conditions and quality instruction. ▸
Competition	▸ There are several areas in BC and Alberta with quality ski touring terrain. ▸ Infrastructure is very well developed in the Canadian Rockies, clustered around the National Parks. ▸ Commercial operators will be challenged to attract clientele, because the park system, local alpine clubs and societies provide access to over 40 public backcountry huts to ski tourers at little or no cost.
Overall Potential	▸ Demand is low but growing for this product. As skiing technology improves and as lift-service options expand, ski touring will become even more accessible to a broader market. ▸ Parks Canada has stated that there is potential for some immediate modest growth in the local, regional and international adventure recreation markets, principally among winter backcountry users. Promotional efforts could be focussed on the parks' high quality winter backcountry recreation opportunities in trying to convert more international visitors from touring travellers to ecotourists. The best potential for commercial development is in association with hut or lodge-based operations.
Location Needs	▸ Available terrain within the parks system ▸ Good variety of terrain (beginner to expert, treed to alpine) ▸ Variety of access options (from roads, helicopter)
Issues	▸ Requirement for certified & licensed guides ▸ Tenured access to large areas of varied terrain ▸ Wildlife conflicts ▸ Avalanche hazards ▸ Conflicts with other users
Infrastructure	▸ Roaded access ▸ Backcountry huts and cabins ▸ Front-country food /accommodation services
Financial	▸ Low capital costs – initial costs would be low comprising equipment and gear. If needed, transportation services could be contracted locally. Any hut or lodge development would add significantly to costs. ▸ The average Canadian tour operator offering ski touring as the major activity had annual gross revenues of $230,122 in 1993, with about 50% bringing in less than $50,000 annually. The gross margins are not that attractive, averaging 4.2% due to higher-than-average operational expenses. The average number of skiers per operation was 572, trip length was between 4 and 4½ days, and per day revenues approximately $100. This is believed to be a good representation of the BC sector as almost one half of all operators in the country are based in BC.

10.4 **Ski Touring**

Business Development	Hiring qualified and certified guides and instructors is increasingly important as backcountry visitation increases and the risk to personal safety climbs. The vast majority of commercial ski tour operators use professionally certified adventure travel guides and/or tour leaders. Telemark skiing will become increasingly popular as will the overall market for Nordic skiing. This will create demand for good beginner instruction and also increase the importance of the accommodation and other facilities in attracting the broader market. Specific niche markets such as women-only clinics and tours have good potential for expansion. ▸ As user fees becomes more prevalent in backcountry areas, more operators may begin working with recreational skiers and clubs to maintain and enhance high quality areas. ▸ Providing courses packaged with rentals and guided tours will encourage beginners and casual participants to participate.
Key Success Factors	▸ Good access to high quality terrain, including permits/tenure for secluded backcountry areas. ▸ For the destination-based traveller, high quality accommodation and support facilities. If specialized target markets are being attracted, then developing menu and accommodations have to be designed accordingly. ▸ High quality, well-maintained equipment, with a variety of sizes suitable for the family market. ▸ Ability to answer questions from both beginners and experts on equipment and trails in the area.
Complementary Activities	▸ Development of temporary or permanent backcountry accommodations (tents/yurts, huts/cabins/lodges).

10.5 Cross-Country Skiing

Product Description	***Development of a long distance Nordic ski trail system and event sponsorship to attract skiers and promote spin-off benefits for the community (e.g. loppet).***
Markets	Participants and enthusiasts from BC and short-haul markets, especially Alberta. The US and overseas markets are limited, but downhill skiers of all geographic origins are a potential target. ▸ Families and local skiers. ▸ Racers and elite athletes. ▸ Destination skiers who want to try a variety of activities.
Competition	▸ There are many well-established cross-country ski areas in BC and Alberta that offer similar terrain features and snow conditions and in some cases have superior infrastructure and amenities. There are 22 major races/loppets in BC this year, primarily in the Interior and the Okanagan.
Overall Potential	▸ Long-term participation trends are only average, and the ability to stage events should be tied to a well-serviced Nordic centre which will have the capacity to deal with periodic increases in activity. ▸ According to Cross Country BC, "super events" could have some potential in the province, especially if they can appeal to the softer, beginner markets. Current loppets are top-down events geared toward the skilled enthusiast.
Location Needs	▸ Requirement for a large, relatively flat area with good snow conditions and trails with a variety of terrain to meet the needs of beginners, intermediate and advanced skiers. ▸ Appropriate elevation for consistent snow conditions. ▸ Road access to at least one end of the trail system.
Issues	▸ Tenure for use of public land or access/purchase of private land. ▸ ▸ Potential conflict with existing tenures and operators. ▸ Environmental and wildlife guidelines. ▸ Need to develop a trail complex more appropriate for racing.
Infrastructure	▸ An organized, well designed and signed trail complex. ▸ Groomed trails. ▸ Warming hut facilities. ▸ Parking areas. ▸ Signage and maps. ▸ Fee collection and sales area. ▸ Ski patrol services. ▸ Grooming machines. ▸ Fuel, storage equipment and repair facilities. ▸ Event organization skills.
Financial	▸ Moderate to high capital costs – a basic facility comprising trail building and minor service development would incur cash costs of at least $25,000 to $35,000 plus contributed equity in the form of volunteer labour. Land and warming hut costs would be in addition.

10.5 Cross-Country Skiing

Business Development	Families with children value good instruction for both the children and adults, activity areas specifically for younger participants, good ski rental facilities in terms of equipment quality and size selection and dining facilities catering to families. Couples will value not only the facilities and trails for the ski activity itself, but the overall ambience of the area, including dining and accommodation. ▸ A potential area would have to be thoroughly researched and planned to ensure there is the right product/market mix. The initial focus would be on identifying potential locations for trails, assessing the feasibility of each (what type of skiing?), and deciding what is needed to develop and maintain the trail system. ▸ For events, cooperation and participation of local outdoor clubs is essential. Affiliations with official race or event series (e.g. BC Cup Series) is essential. Cross Country BC sanctions races in the province among its affiliated local clubs. National and international sanctions are also possible. ▸ As with any Cross-country ski product, there must be a favourable Nordic ski area or centre and the required hospitality services. A minimum of 30 km events are standard. ▸ Organizing the loppet is very important and in order to be sanctioned must be innovative and enhance the visitor experience to increase participation and visitation. An assessment of the most successful loppets in other parts of the world could be undertaken. Local members may have to be educated on the different "styles" and "formats" of cross country ski competitions and encouraged to put them into their event hosting plans before a loppet is considered. ▸ Cross Country BC's Western Edge loppet program may be a model for development.
Key Success Factors	▸ Cross-country ski areas are being transformed into multi-use, winter playgrounds or resort areas to appeal to broader markets. The is unlikely to be sufficient demand for solely cross-country unless other activities are factored into the development. ▸ While natural features such as varied terrain are important, the built environment is critical – that means things like night lighting, parking, clear signage, high-quality and well-maintained equipment, transportation services and the availability of multi-activity packages can really broaden the appeal. ▸ A Nordic centre will not catch on in a big way unless there is extensive grooming on the trail system, perhaps using snowmobiles to pull small groomers. If trails are groomed skiers can count on good conditions and so will be more willing to drive to the area for a day or weekend. ▸ Trails for skiers could be utilized in the summer and off-seasons for hikers, bicyclists, horseback riders for connecting various components of a site. But trails would have to allow the user to view and visit a variety of ecological and natural features.
Complementary Activities	▸ Trails can be used for mountain biking and hiking in the summer / shoulder seasons. ▸ Provision of accommodation and services.

10.6 Road Tours

Product Description	***Highway Circle Tours.***
Markets	Primarily free independent regional and short-haul visitors from North American markets. This group tends to travel by private vehicle and will make a decision to participate in sightseeing and touring once in the region. ▸ Secondarily, bus/motorcoach tour participants from the US, Europe and Asia.
Competition	▸ Many regions of the province and neighbouring Alberta have upgraded their hospitality infrastructure, services and attractions in recent years to pursue independent travellers. ▸ A major source of competition is Alaska, the Yukon and Northwest BC. Many visitors to the Peace region are travelling to and from Alaska and do not have a lot of discretionary holiday time. Catering more to this market means providing experiences not available further north. As an alternative route to Alaska, Northwest BC is also a competitive threat.
Overall Potential	▸ The overall potential is good for the circle tour product, although the lack of growth in highway traffic counts suggests that communities will have to attract more of the existing visitor volumes if they are to increase activity.
Location Needs	▸ Access to a variety of frontcountry attractions and interpreted experiences. ▸ High quality scenic viewing, wildlife viewing and sightseeing potential. ▸ Convenient access to parks and natural areas in the mid-country.
Issues	▸ Highway safety. ▸ ▸ Road conditions. ▸ Cooperation among municipalities.
Infrastructure	▸ Well-paved and maintained highway system. ▸ Secondary road system that provides access to staging areas for day activities. ▸ Pullouts and interpretive signage at regular intervals throughout the route. ▸ Visible, efficient visitor information centres. ▸ Well trained hospitality personnel. ▸ Visitor attractions.
Financial	▸ Low capital costs (marketing) – Circle tours are primarily a marketing tool linking together a variety of existing features and attractions so as to encourage highway travellers to spend more time in the region. ▸ High capital costs (infrastructure) – Developing and maintaining a quality highway system with the necessary interpretive facilities and visitor attractions requires a significant investment in public and private infrastructure.
Business Development	▸ In order to compete in the tourist market regionally and worldwide, communities in the region will need to find ways to coordinate their development and marketing efforts that emphasize the area's distinctive features in order to draw tourists. ▸ Internet websites are being used to provide information that allows individual tourists to plan their own itineraries and make bookings for accommodations in advance. Tourists should able to develop self-guided tours. There should also be supporting material and interpretive/sightseeing facilities along the touring route to support this self-guided activity. ▸ More conventional collateral material such as brochures and maps/guides in cooperation with communities and operators throughout the route will be required. Another possible tool are cassettes and CDs with narrative tours of the area.

10.6 Road Tours

Key Success Factors	Successful road touring regions have made commitments to preserving their areas while developing roads for improved access. Corridor Management Plans (CMP) are being used to establish clear guidelines for development and activities along a route. Thus, while infrastructure development is important for tourism, communities and operators will need to also be aware of the need to act in a way that conserves and protects the area for sustainable development. There is a need to encourage input from various parties and develop a cohesive strategy for tourism along the touring route. ▸ The ability to tap into senior government funding for highway development and improvement projects could determine how successful communities will be for developing their road tour markets. ▸ Developing highways in scenic areas with regular points of interest en route. ▸ Having clear signage throughout the route. ▸ Developing an adequate number of multi-lane roads to handle traffic volumes and maintain safe conditions. ▸ Variety of accommodation, particularly for families.
Complementary Activities	▸ Any accessible day-use outdoor activity. ▸ Local attractions such as museums, interpretive centres and resorts. ▸ Accommodation packages.

10.7 Lodge/Resort

Product Description	***Lodge / Retreat / B&Bs.***
Markets	Soft adventure markets. Seniors for Elderhostels. Nature lovers of all ages. ▸ North American, Europeans, Japanese, other international. ▸ Destination market.
Competition	▸ Backcountry accommodation is not well developed in BC and, except in the case of fishing lodges, not that well marketed. There are some high quality lodge/resorts in the Canadian Rockies and on the Coast, but there is also room for expansion.
Overall Potential	▸ Lodge/resort accommodation supports the development of many other products assessed in this report which cater to the growing soft adventure market. In general, the hard adventure/enthusiast market will be satisfied with minimal infrastructure and the availability of camping facilities. ▸ Lodges and resorts lodges are generally preferred by the experienced ecotourist, with 66 percent stating them as their preferred choice of accommodation. In contract, the general touring traveller prefers to stay in hotels/motels (56 percent).
Location Needs	▸ Access to different activities from accommodation location. ▸ Roads / fly in areas / hike in. ▸ Wilderness areas, parks, solitude, wildlife and wildlife viewing.
Issues	▸ Crown lease if development is on public land. ▸ Applicable licences and permits. ▸ Capacity of trails, areas to accommodate activities. ▸ Conflicts on trails with other users.
Infrastructure	▸ Trails or trail systems. ▸ Roads for access or fly-in capabilities. ▸ Availability of hospitality personnel. ▸ Certified guides. ▸ Access to municipal services or provision of same.
Financial	▸ Moderate to high capital costs – a wide range of capital costs are possible, depending on the nature and size of the facility, but generally this product calls for significant land and building development. ▸ There are few statistics available for backcountry accommodation operations in BC outside of the sport fishing sector. Unaffiliated front-country accommodation facilities such as hotels and motels are rarely profitable without food and licensed beverage services, so backcountry cabins/lodges that are removed from convenient road access will be even more difficult to support.

10.7 Lodge/Resort

Business Development	Cabins/lodges require a significant investment in "human capital" for hospitality services (i.e. food and lodging), interpretation and guiding. Lodges are becoming multi-activity and multi-season resort destinations for both guided and self-guided activities. By being multi-activity and multi-season, lodges are in a better position to manage their cash flow and staff. It will be important to find complementary activities to leverage staff and equipment across seasons. ▸ Partnering with guiding operations to offer tours where expertise does not exist in-house. ▸ Theming is on the rise. 36 percent of leisure travellers surveyed said they were looking for a lodge, resort or hotel with a distinctive theme. Although outdoor adventure could be considered a theme in and of itself, the increasing number of lodges will dilute this as a differentiating factor. Therefore, specialization will become more important for a lodge to succeed.
Key Success Factors	▸ A remote, uncrowded, scenic location that has controlled access is preferred for accommodation development. Adding amenities that add to the enjoyment of the overall experience would improve marketability but this will be limited by the availability of capital. ▸ Providing gear, guides and interpretive services linked to multi-activity experiences. ▸ Ease of access to and from staging areas. ▸ Where the facility is geared toward trail-based activities like hiking, biking and nature observation there must be reasonable trails and access. ▸ Accommodation facilities which conform to sustainability principles. A first priority is facilities with minimum environmental impact. Buildings that demonstrate the use of recycled materials are becoming more common. The use of low quantities of water and electricity is desirable. Where possible, internal electrical generation, from water, wind and sun should take place.
Complementary Activities	▸ Any number of theme focused retreats (health, food, hobbies, business workshops). ▸ Tie in with other activities in the area. ▸ Locally focused booking / central registry agency.

10.8 Huts

Product Description	***Individual hut or hut system.***
Markets	The market for the hut will depend on the activity being targeted and the degree of "rusticness" of the accommodation. Huts can range from the very comfortable to the very primitive. ▸ Generally, the soft adventure traveller will value a hut for its comfort, the access that it provides to more remote outdoor area and other amenities such as meals. The hard adventure traveller is likely an active enthusiast in the particular activity being performed, and appreciates the proximity and shelter from the elements in the high alpine or wilderness areas, making more challenging routes possible. ▸ Single hut users will select the hut based on its location vis-à-vis a particular destination (i.e. a climbing peak) or an area (i.e. backcountry bowl for skiing) that suits the level of challenge they are seeking. They will also look for the hut to have a variety of excursions from the hut. Hut-to-hut users will select a hut system based on the variety of features within the area covered throughout the system. They will rarely spend more than one or two nights at a single hut.
Competition	▸ Most of the existing huts and hut systems in Western Canada are targeted at backcountry skiers in the winter and hikers, backpackers and mountaineers in the summer. For both these activities the national park huts and others operated by the Alpine Club of Canada are major attractants. ▸ Many snowmobile and cross-country clubs maintain warming huts for local recreationists. ▸ Internationally, Colorado, Alaska and Europe have destination hut systems.
Overall Potential	▸ There is good potential for a hut system in the region because of the overall lack of tourism infrastructure and the possibility of linking up with the highway system for entry and exit points.
Location Needs	▸ Access to different activities from accommodation location. ▸ Access to high quality resources and features. ▸ Wilderness areas, parks, solitude, wildlife and wildlife viewing.
Issues	▸ Crown lease or licence of occupation if development is on public land. ▸ Vandalism and unlicensed use. ▸ Hut maintenance and upkeep. ▸ Fee collection.
Infrastructure	▸ Trails or trail systems. ▸ Signage. ▸ Reasonable road access to staging areas. ▸ Hospitality and transportation services near visitor centres and staging areas.
Financial	▸ Moderate capital costs – rustic huts can be constructed for as little as $20,000 and range upward depending on size and comfort level. Huts are rarely developed for exclusive private sector use because of difficulties associated with fee collection and unapproved use. The revenue potential is rarely high enough to justify an on-site attendant or manager so the ability to control use is limited.

10.8 Huts

Business Development	Typically, recreation clubs who have been licensed for such development by BCAL have erected huts on Crown land outside of parks. There is no exclusivity of access to or within the huts in order to preserve the right of public access. Commercial use is considered unethical unless the operator reimburses for that use or otherwise contributes to maintenance and upkeep. ▸ There are few instances of hut development on Crown land by commercial operators because of problems associated with vandalism and unauthorized use by the public. As huts would be constructed on an existing trail, access would be available to all trail users. Even if a private operator constructed new trails for a hut or hut system, BCAL is likely to authorize such development through a Licence of Occupation, which would still allow public use of the trails and access to the hut (although the hut itself could be locked). This lack of exclusivity is likely to deter future commercial hut development. ▸ The funding of hut development is a major issue in BC, both for the initial capital investment and the ongoing operating costs. Most public or club huts have depended on donations and volunteers to build and operate. For privately-owned huts or refuges, such as those in France, many were previously farmhouses that were converted into huts, thereby reducing the initial capital cost. As well, these huts are in areas that already had well-developed and popular trail systems – in other words, demand preceded the fulfillment of the need. Huts can be developed to some extent through volunteer efforts and "sweat equity", but new facilities will have to demonstrate the ability to be somewhat self-sustaining. This will require careful demand assessment among targeted users. Where public huts are projected to operate on a deficit, the shortfall must be made up through other revenue sources, such as fundraising activities and membership dues. ▸ Any hut development must establish clear guidelines for acceptable use and activities and the extent to which they can be done in the area supported by the huts. They must follow practices that minimize the impact on the environment. ▸ A hut be developed either with minimal amenities that only need replenishment once in a while, or arrange for regular transport of supplies into the hut, either by motorized or non-motorized means. This will require careful planning to meet the expectations of users once they have been established while not compromising land health. ▸ Hut operators must establish a clear code of conduct and payment schedules. This information should be made available to users before they embark on their trip to the hut. In terms of enforcement, it may be necessary to employ hut wardens for the peak seasons, if not at all times the hut is open.
Key Success Factors	▸ Clearly identifying purpose of the hut – is it for safety purposes, or for a comfortable stay in the mountains? ▸ Encouraging a sense of responsibility and peer pressure to keep the hut clean. ▸ Ensuring users understand the accommodation limits and space beforehand. ▸ Following sustainability principles ▸ Publishing exactly what is available at each hut how spots can be obtained as well as up-to-date information on availability. ▸ Making use of the Internet to accept and track bookings, which requires minimal staffing once system has been developed. ▸ Encouraging sharing of information amongst clubs, tour operators and other users.
Complementary Activities	▸ Any remote or trail-based outdoor activity, especially hiking, backpacking, ski touring, snowmobiling and lakes/rivers tours. ▸ Locally focused booking / central registry agency.

Annex

C

11 Annex C — List of Acronyms

ABC	Aboriginal Business Canada
AGM	Annual General Meeting
AGOP	Angling Guide Operating Plan
ATBC	Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia
ABTTC	Aboriginal Tourism Team Canada
B&B	Bed and Breakfast
BCAL	British Columbia Assets and Land Corporation
BCEAD	British Columbia Environmental Assessment Office
CFDC	Community Futures Development Corporation
CoC	Chamber of Commerce
CTC	Canadian Tourism Commission
EAO	British Columbia Environmental Assessment Office
ERDZ	Enhanced Resource Development Zone
FishRBC	Fisheries Renewal British Columbia
FIT	Fully Independent Traveler
FRBC	Forest Renewal British Columbia
HRDC	Human Resources Development Canada
IRDZ	Integrated Resource Development Zone
LAC	Local Advisory Committee for Tourism Opportunity Study
LRMP	Land Resource Management Plan
MCD	Ministry of Community Development
MELP	Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks
MoF	Ministry of Forests
MoFish	Ministry of Fisheries
MSBTC	Ministry of Small Business, Tourism and Culture
PAS2	Goal 2 Protected Area Strategy
PUP	Park Use Permits
RCEP	Regional Community Enterprise Program
ROS	Resource Opportunity Spectrum
SRDZ	Special Resource Development Zone
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Analysis
TBC	Tourism British Columbia
TIA	Travel Industry Association of America
TOS	Tourism Opportunities Study
WTO	World Tourism Organization
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council

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